

Introduction To “Adobe Elements”



Your essential guide to Photoshop Elements; Elements according to Adobe is one of the most powerful editing pieces of software on the market today and with the latest introduction of Elements it's slowly getting closer to its big brother.

Okay so what's this all about? Well, we are going to show you how to set up your Elements workspace to suit the way you work and how you want to work. We'll be helping you master all the new and amazing tools and features which are going to help you in enhancing and retouching your images with more ease.

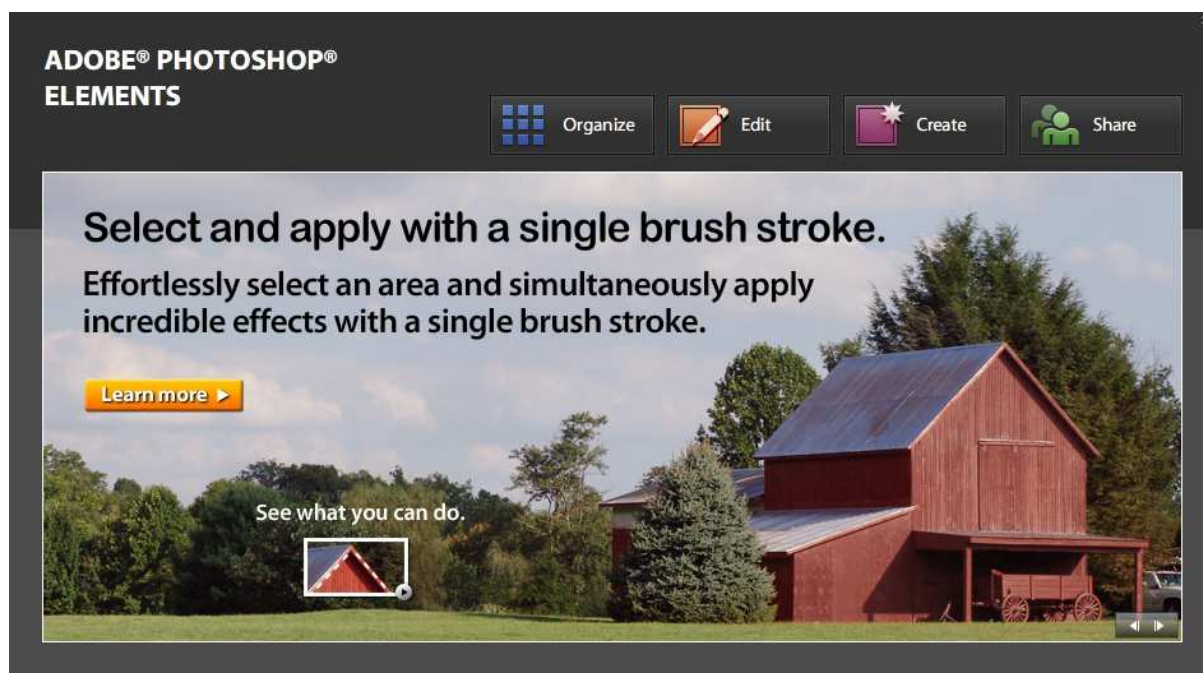
Chapter 1 – Introduction Into Elements



The Elements Interface; As you know Elements doesn't have a single interface as you can launch the program in several modes.

This all depends on what you're doing; Organising your images, Full edit mode, Quick Fix, or a really cool feature is to create options to produce photo books.

If you have the Elements you'll also notice some more really cool features like; Email, Burning to CD or DVD, and also a real plus is that the interface is less cluttered, which makes your life easier when you're moving around the screen.



As you can see in the image above, in the bottom left hand corner you have a drop down box, which you can start up with either Editor or Organiser.



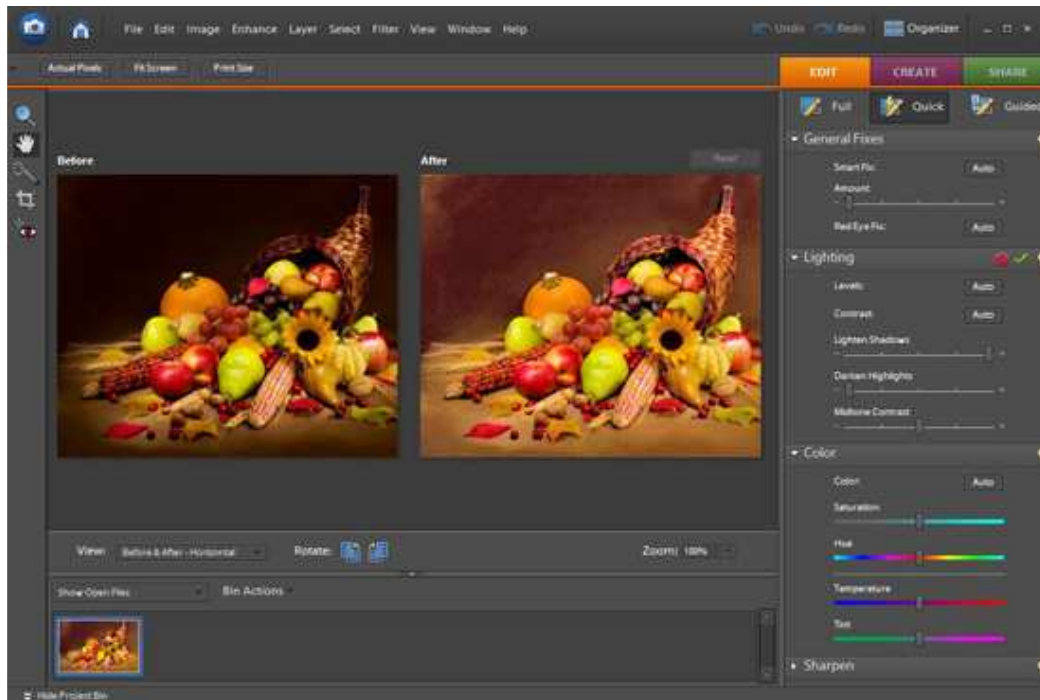
Quick Fix Guide Mode; The quick mode enables you to make very basic alterations to your images as you can alter the following; Lighting, colour, sharpen, and you also have the options to do a smart fix.

Elements also gives you an auto fix button which can be found on the right hand side. Another way to access the adjustments buttons is through the Enhance menu.

Auto fixing is a real “God Send” if you're a complete novice at image editing and if you're after a quick fix to your image.

As you can see from the image below, the two images have been altered. You can see the before and after, with the after being on the right.

The Absolute Beginners Guide To Adobe Elements By: www.masteradobeelements.com
For More Elements Tutorials, Tips and Tricks Visit Are Award Winning Blog: www.masteradobeelements.com/blog



Here are six great short tools and features.

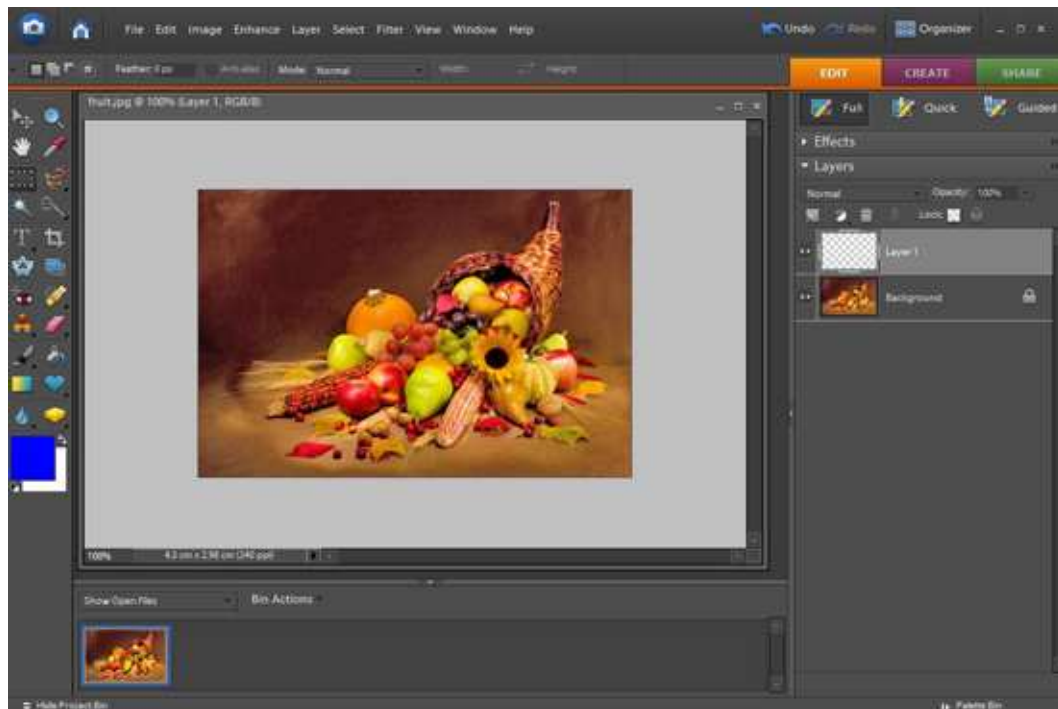
- 1** - Sometimes you'll find your editing isn't going the way it should be, so you can just hit the "Reset Button" on the after picture.
- 2** - If you need to show your before and after images, there's a drop down button in the bottom left hand corner, which says "View".
- 3** - Your tool box can be found on the left hand side of the screen.
- 4** - You can zoom in from your image on this page and the zoom button can be found in the bottom left hand corner.
- 5** - Your auto tab buttons can be found on the right hand side of the screen.
- 6** - Each quick mode gives you the option of using sliders.



Full Edit Mode; The full edit mode gives you everything you need to alter any of your images. You'll find that most of the tools and commands are found in the palettes.

The palettes are used for managing your layers and applying effects to your images. By default the layers and effects palette are displayed automatically. If you wish you can also open more by choosing from the windows menu, which can be found at the top.

Another really cool feature for the palettes is they float, so you can have them where you like. Once you have brought your image up, you'll find below the main image window your images that you have opened. See image below.



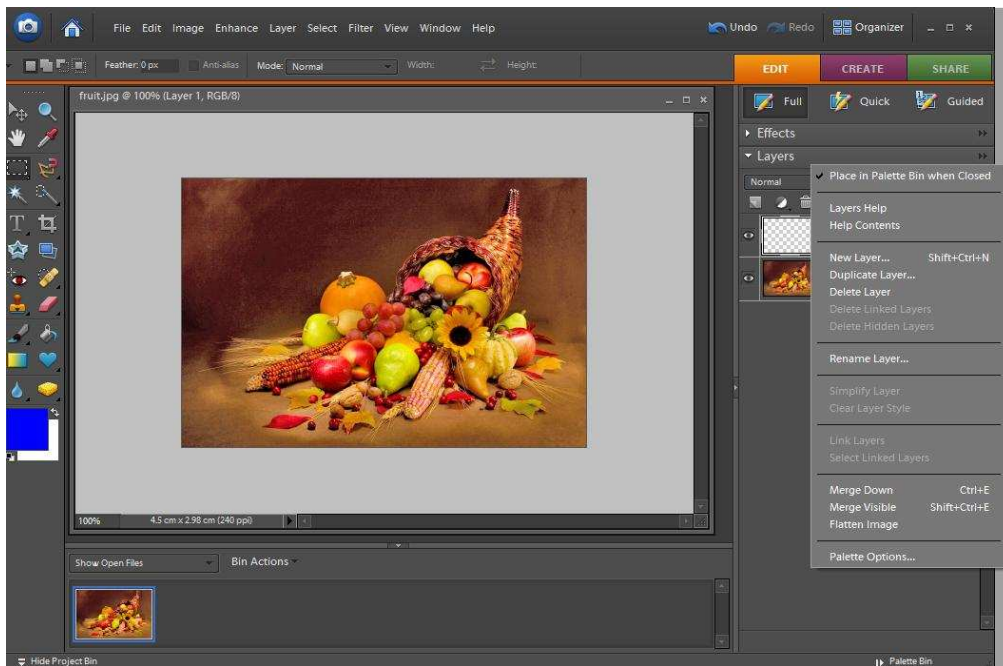
If you need to alter an image all you need to do is just click the thumbnail image.

Here are four great short tools and features.

- 1** - At the top you'll see a quick undo and redo button. This is really cool as you don't need to keep going to the undo in the history palette.
- 2** - Any photos you have open are automatically stored in the bin at the bottom.
- 3** - Your tool box can be dragged and dropped anywhere on the screen.
- 4** - The buttons found at the top right give you the options of switching modes. Edit Create and Share.



Working With Palettes; When you're working in your palettes menus you can customise them. Also you have the option to minimise or maximise your palette. If you look at the image below you see the layer's palette menu is open and all you have to do here is click on the arrow button.



You can also change the width of your docked palettes and all you need to do is click and drag the lines.

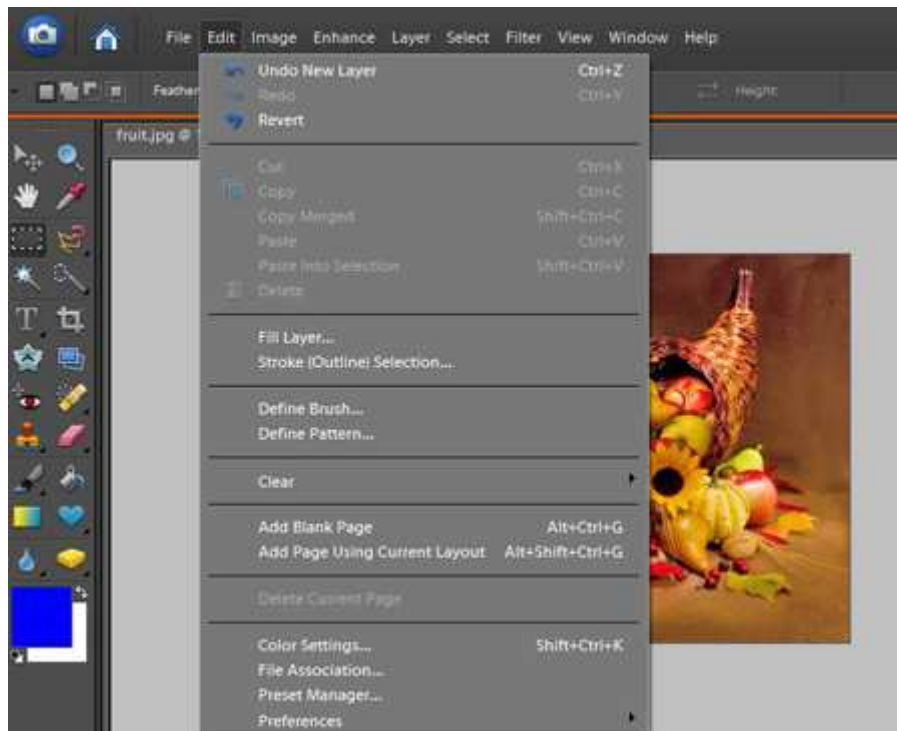
You will find that the your palette bin does take quiet a lot of room up when they are open, so a great tip here is to keep just a few palettes handy which you work with all the time.



Working With Menus; Elements is like any other software program and you have to know where all the tools are and how to access them through the menus.

The menus change in Elements depending on which mode you're in. You'll notice that if you're in the quick fix or full edit mode the menus roughly stay the same and that there are just a few commands which are different.

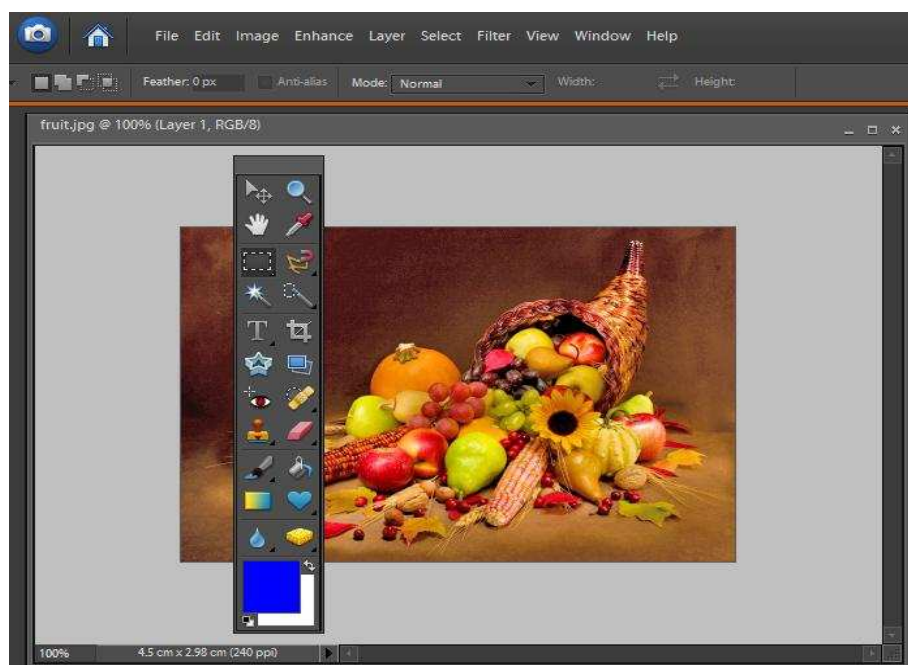
Now if you click on the menu header at the top you'll see a list of commands such as; file, edit, image...etc. Each one of these has a drop down menu. See image below.



You can also speed up your editing by right clicking on the canvas, and on certain parts of your palettes and dialogues.



Working With The Toolbox; This is where all the exciting thing happen in the tool box. First you need to familiarise yourself with this.



As you can see I have moved the toolbox onto my image and this is very straight forward to do as it's just a case of dragging and dropping.

Back to the toolbox. Your toolbox has several tools such as the Move tool, Crop tool and other hidden gems such as the Lasso tool. If you click on the little black arrow you'll see more options from a fly out box.

All the tools can be accessed with short cut keys which you should and need to get familiar with as this way you can work much quicker.

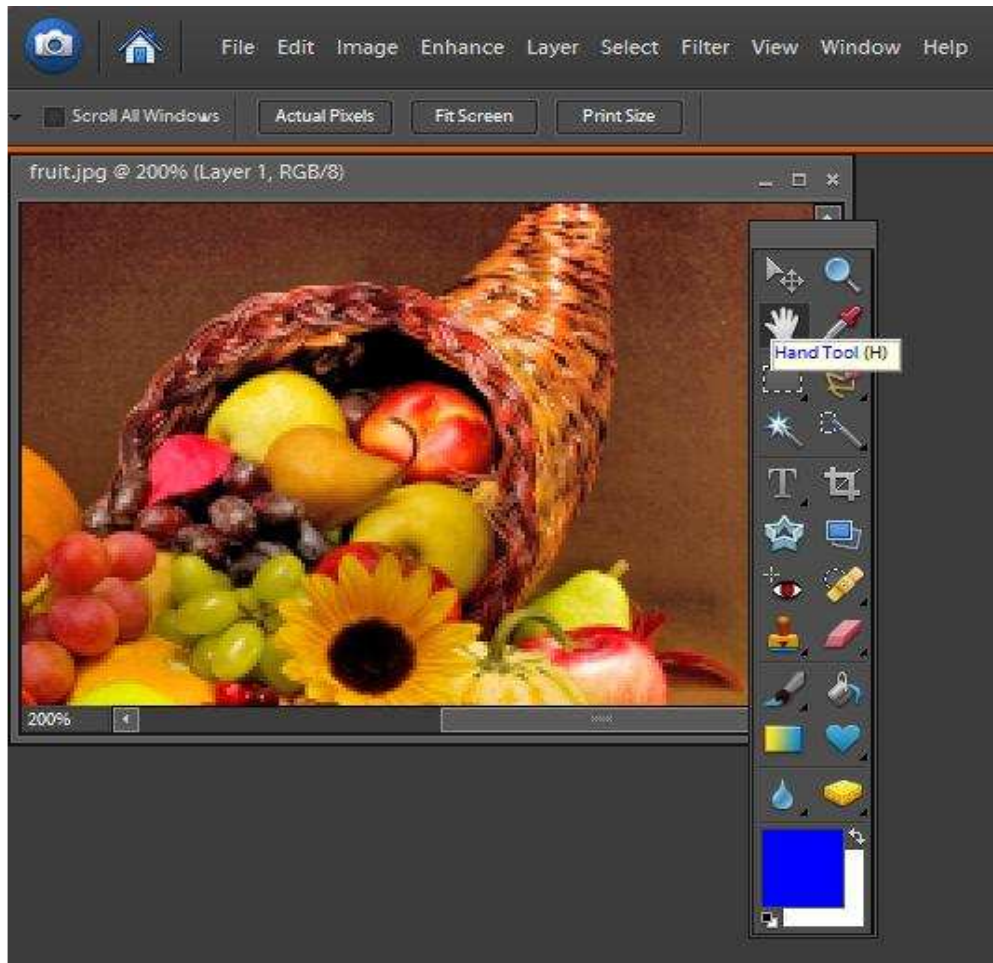


Scrolling and Zooming Your Images; You'll find sometimes when you're working with your images that you'll have to zoom in and out.



This can be done by using the view menu at the top, but another great way to access them is by using the short cut keys. (Ctrl and press the + or- key down.) Also another great way is to keep one hand on your mouse and the other on Ctrl and space bar and just click you mouse.

To scroll around your image you have two options, either use your hand tool in your toolbox or you can just hold down the space bar and scroll you mouse.



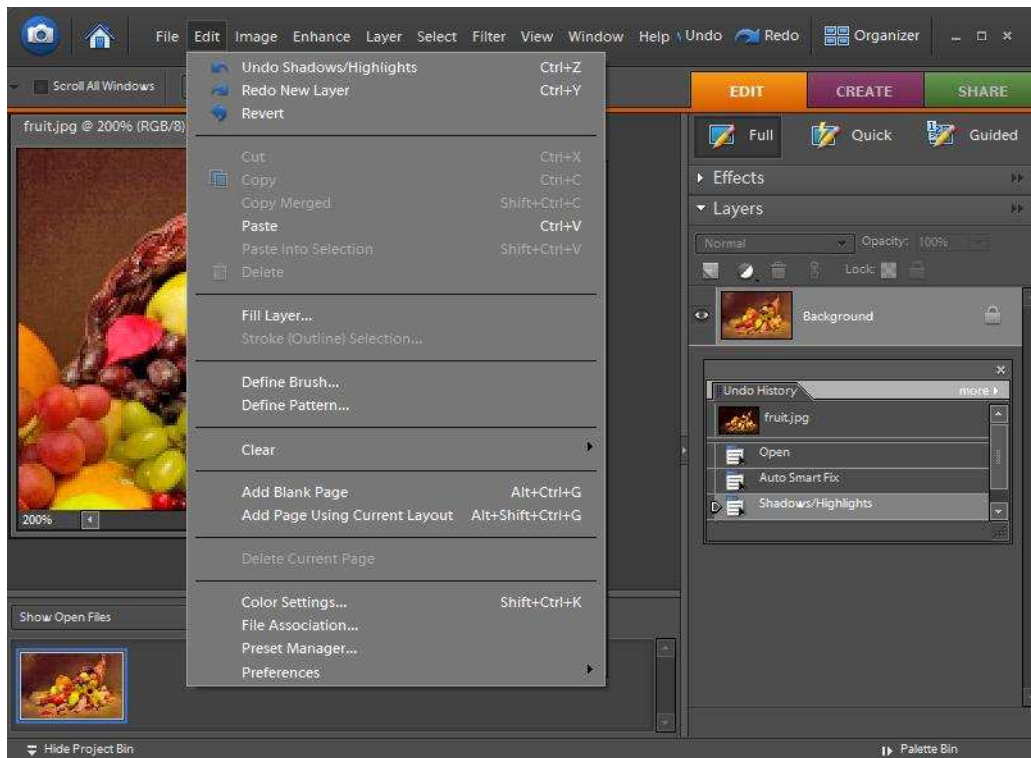
History and Undos; You'll always need to undo and edit your images within Elements because everyone makes mistakes. Trust me I've made loads throughout my years.

You need to note that when you're altering or editing your image, your original file will only be modified when you save it.

You can cancel your last edit by doing the following Edit. Undo or to reapply you just need to do the following... Edit >Redo. These commands can also be found in the history palette as seen in the image below.

Again you need to get used to using short cuts, and the short cut keys and for these they are (Ctrl+Z for undo and Ctrl+Y for Redo).

You'll also see at the top to left hand side that you have Undo and Redo arrows.



A great tip for you is to always have your history palette open, because whenever you're making changes to your image, each one is listed.



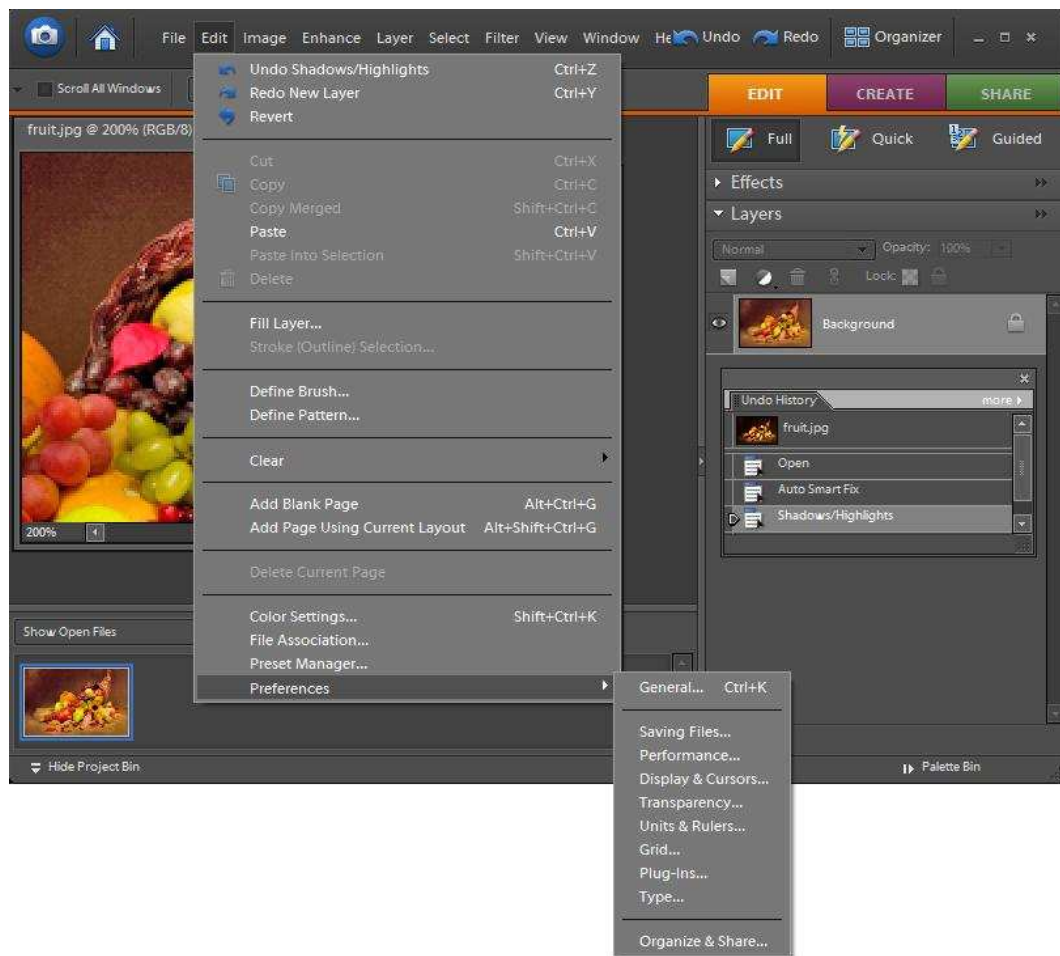
Customising Your Set-Up In Elements; If you want to customise your preferences it's very straight forward and easy to do.

You just have to the following; Select Edit> Preferences and you'll see another fly out box with a load of more options.

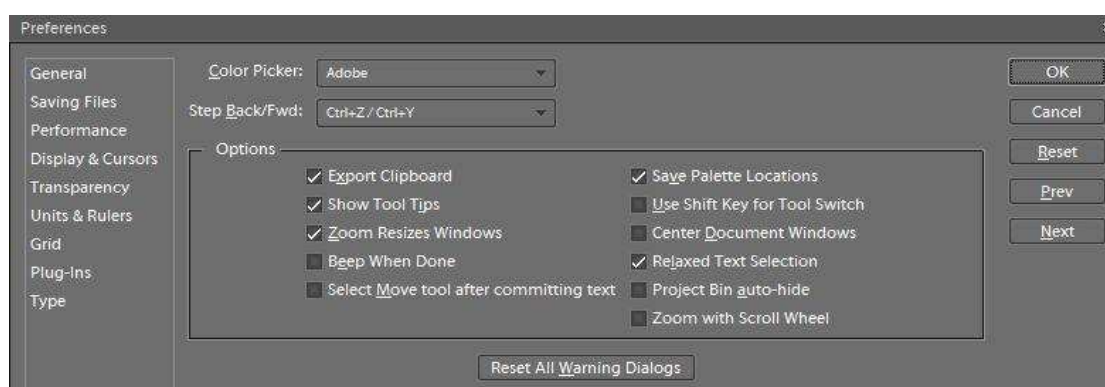
When Elements is installed it automatically sets you up with the default ones, but like anything else it's worth discovering what else might be useful to you.

If you do alter any options you need to know and be aware that the changes will only take place once Elements has shut down and restarted again.

There is also a factory setting in case you ever need to revert back.



If you want to see what the original settings are set to, then select Edit > Preferences > General. The image below is set to the default settings.



Chapter 2 – Managing And Organising Your Images

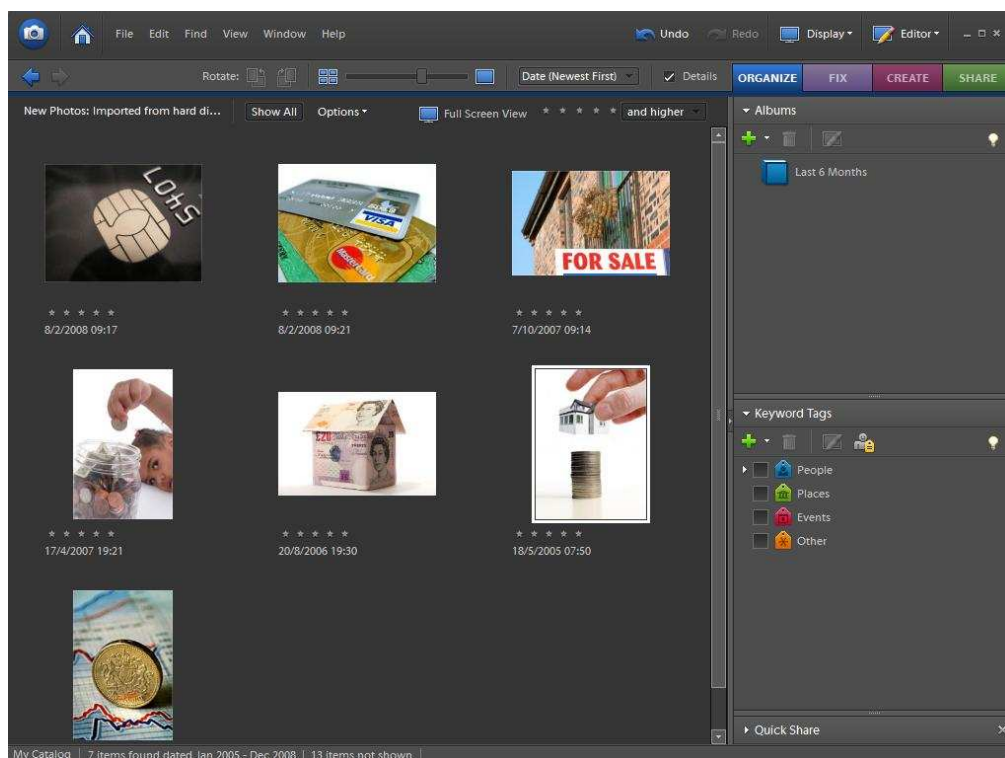
Elements comes with two great programs rolled into one. The editor side and your organizer and this is where you can manage all your images or photos.



How To Import Your Images; Adobe Photo down loader will import your images from your memory card or your camera. Once you have installed Elements 5 – 6 you'll have the option to install adobe photo down loader. The interface you get from the down loader comes with a standard interface where you can save or rename your images.



Organizing And Viewing Options; When you've got past the stage of importing your images you can start organizing them in your organizer. The more experienced users use this as their central hub for viewing their entire photo collection. There are two ways you can locate your organizer. First from the start up menu, and then if you're in edit mode you have an organizer button at the top right.



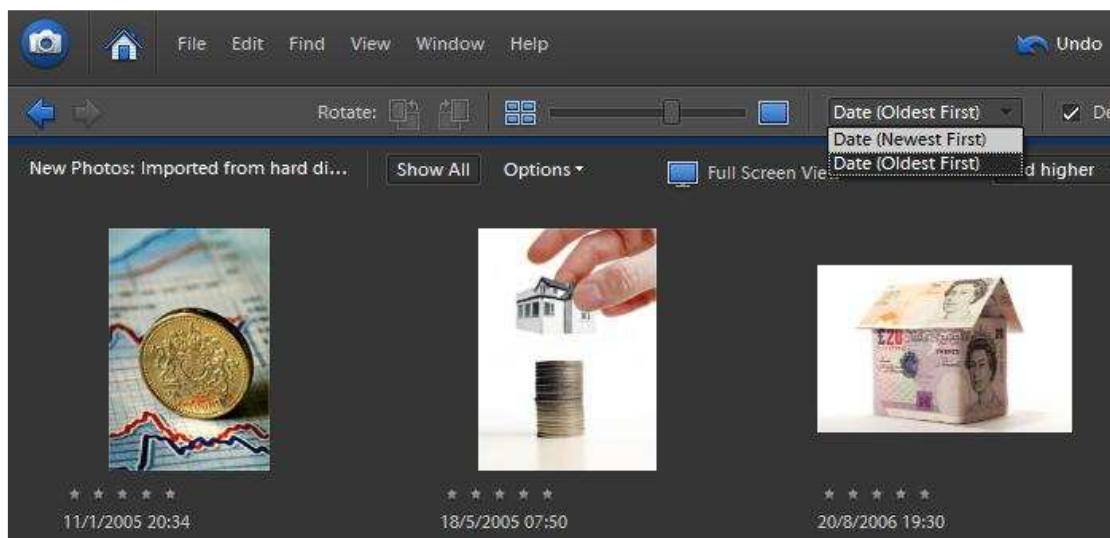
Here are four great short tools and features.

- 1 – The slider at the top controls the size of your thumbnail images or photos.
- 2 – By automatic default the newest of images or photos are shown first.
- 3 – If you need to view anyone of your images just click on it and a blue border will indicate it has been selected.
- 4 – To the right you'll see two palettes, (Keyword palette and your Albums palette).



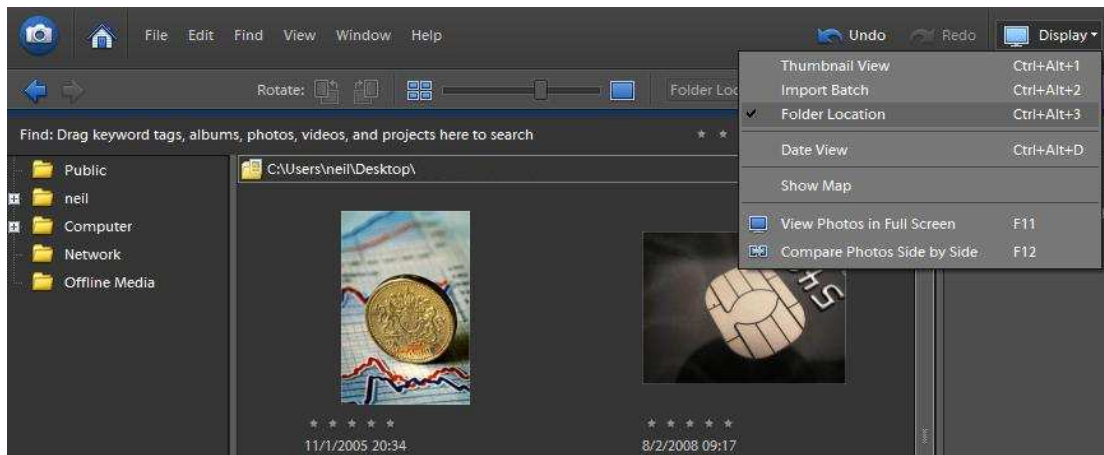
Browse Your Images By The Date; When you're ready to browse through your images you'll find once you have opened up your organizer that they are displayed with the newest first as this is an automatic default with Elements.

You can change your viewing options by just clicking on the drop down menu under date, as seen in the image below.



Browse Your Images By Your Folders; Another great option in Elements is browsing your images by their folders.

If you need to see exactly where your images are located, just select the following;- Display and then click on Folder Location. See the image below.



View In Full Screen; Elements allows you to take a full screen view without leaving your organizer. There are three ways you can do this, you can select Display menu, by double clicking on your image, or the best for me is the short cut key, (F11).

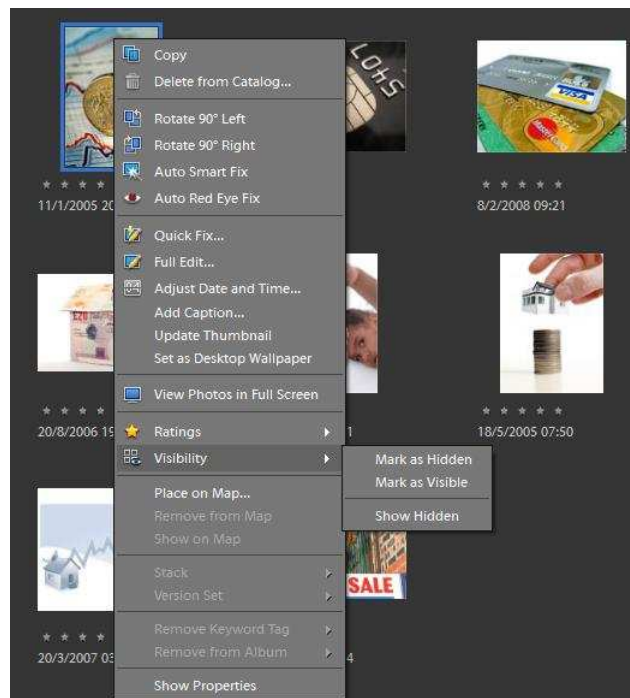
You also can view two images at once when they are at that size and all you need to do is just click (F12). If you need to come out of this just press the (Esc button).



Hiding Your Images; Elements allows you to hide you images so it helps you de-clutter your organizer and by default it doesn't delete them. Doing this is very simple and straight forward, right click on your image and select Visibility > Mark as hidden.

What happens here is your images will disappear from within your organizer window but they will still be in your catalogue. If you view this image from it's original location you'll notice a little small hidden icon which is a closed eye.

When you feel like changing them around again you just need to right click on your image and go to visibility and choose Mark as Visible. To delete an image for good all you need to do right click and choose delete.

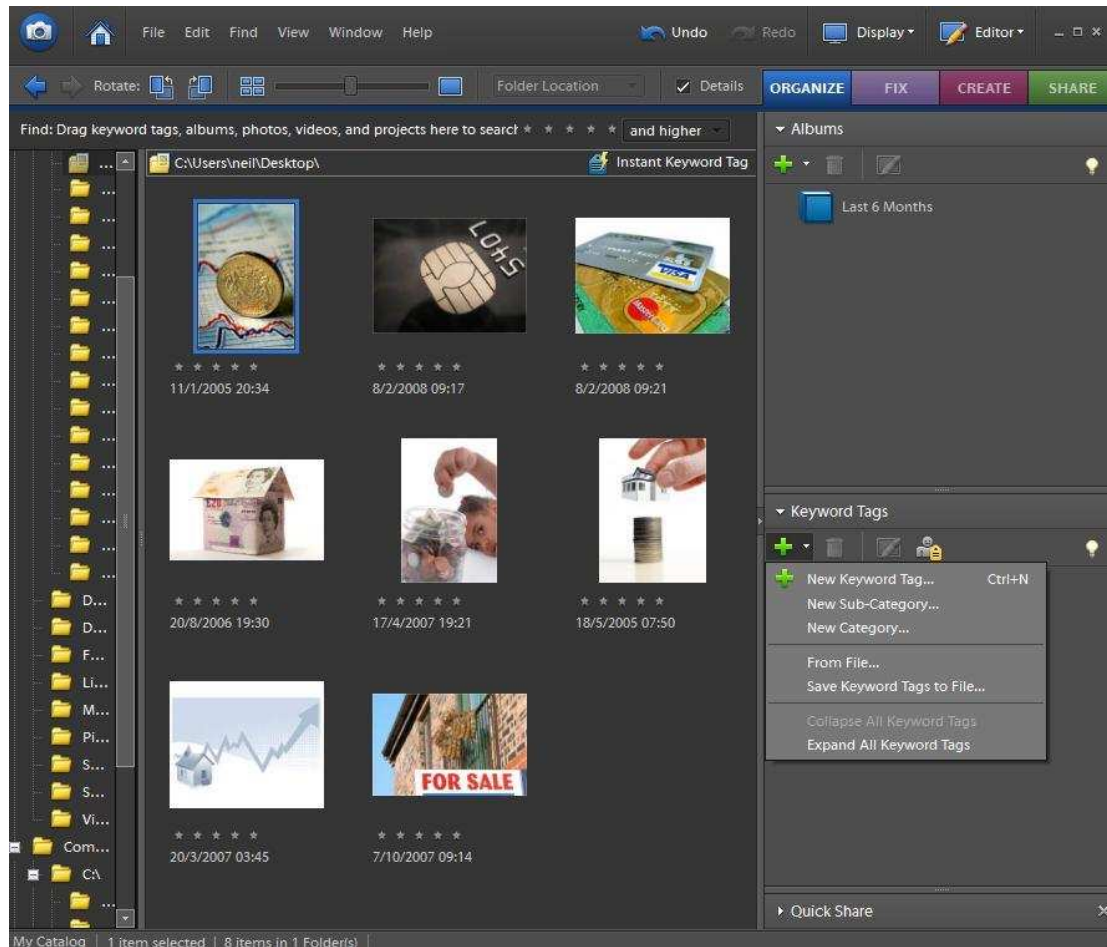




Tags And Attaching Tags To Your Photos; Tags are just short phrases which you can give your images as this helps you to find your images or photos more quickly. Tags are listed in your organizer bin, under categories and sub categories.

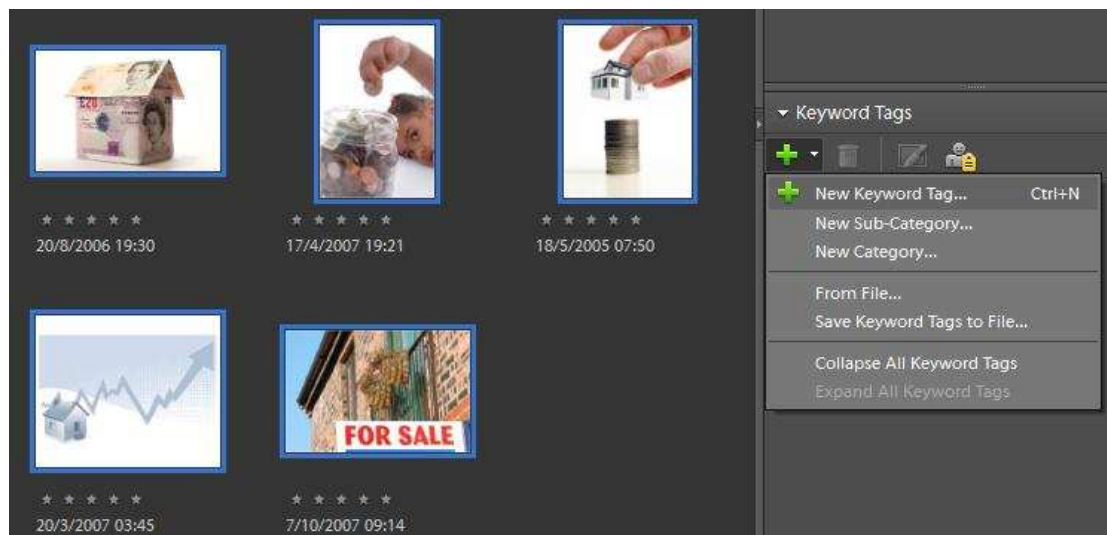
Elements by default gives you a selection of categories, but you have the option to create more.

If you want to find your images or photos with a certain tags, simply click in the box next to the tag name. You'll see in the image below where your tags buttons are.



Attaching tags to your images is very time consuming, but you can speed up the process in a number of ways.

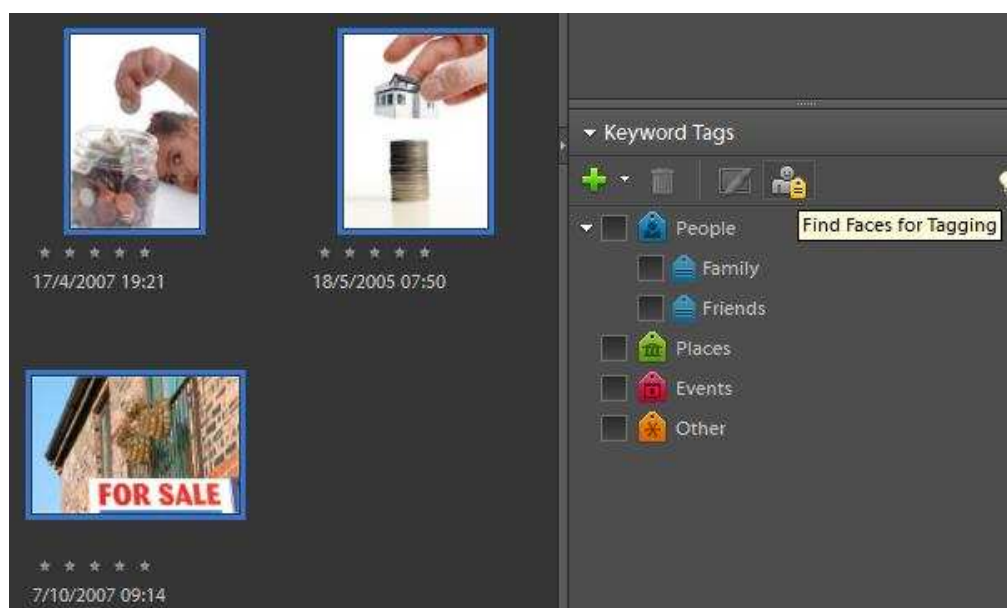
You can first select a number of your images or photos and just apply them with the same tag and then click on the plus arrow under the keyword tag. See image below.



Once you have click on the new keyword tag another fly out box will appear, and this is where you then putt all your keywords for tagging.

Or you can try to use the description names from the folders where all your images are stored.

Next and my favourite is the find faces tagging option which can be found on the right hand side half way down. See image below.

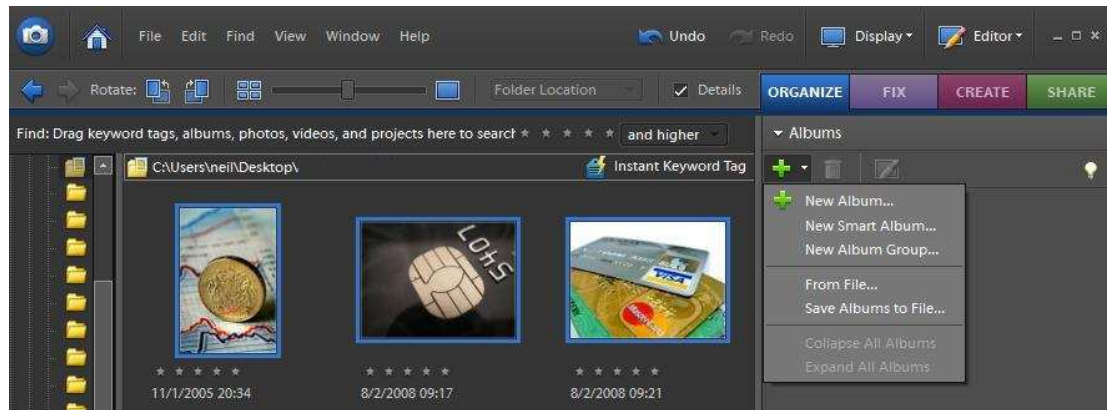


Once you've clicked on that, another fly out box will appear. Here you can create new tags and even add existing tags.

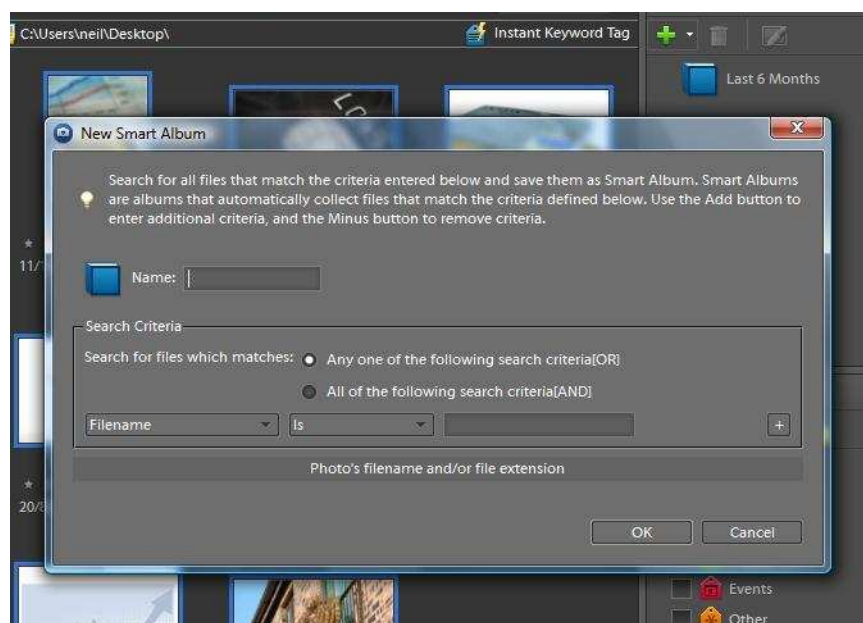


How To Create Albums And Smart Albums; Elements allows you to create group related albums for your images or photos.

If you want to create an album all you need to do is go to your albums palette on the right hand side and click on the plus sign and then choose a new album from the drop down menu. See image below.



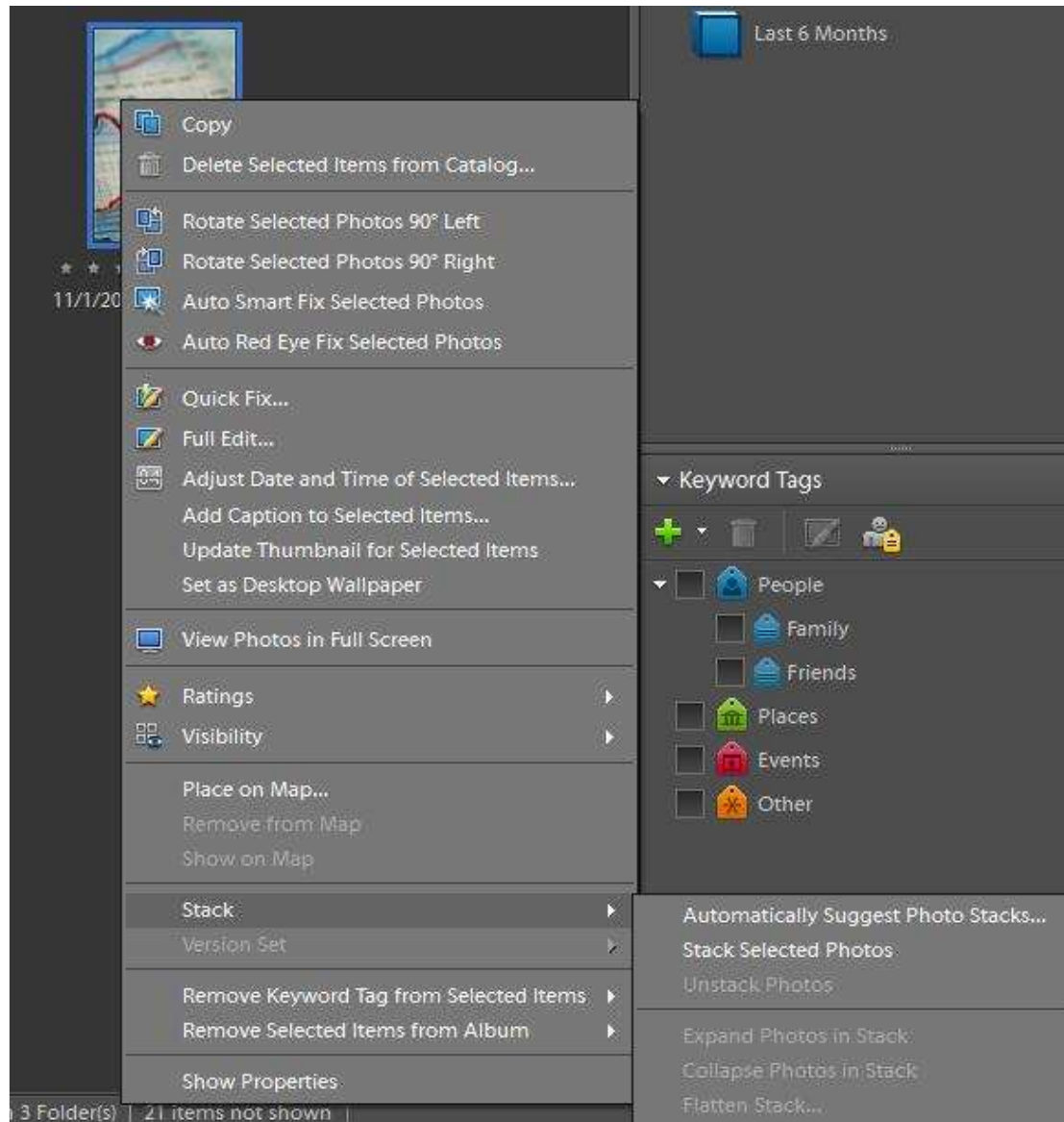
Smart albums are a great new asset to Elements. If you want to create a smart album just follow the steps above, but instead of choosing new album, click on new smart album. Your next step here is to enter your smart albums criteria which can be seen in the image below.



Once all the information has been entered your smart album will be created.



Learn How To Stack Photos; Another great feature in Elements is stacking your images or photos. Let's say you have four of the same image but you don't know which image to discard. All you need to do is select all four images or photos and right click on one of them and choose stack from the menu options. See image below.



Now just click on the stack selected photos and your four images will be stacked. You'll notice when you've stacked your images a little blue icon in the top right hand side of your image and this indicates your images have been stacked.

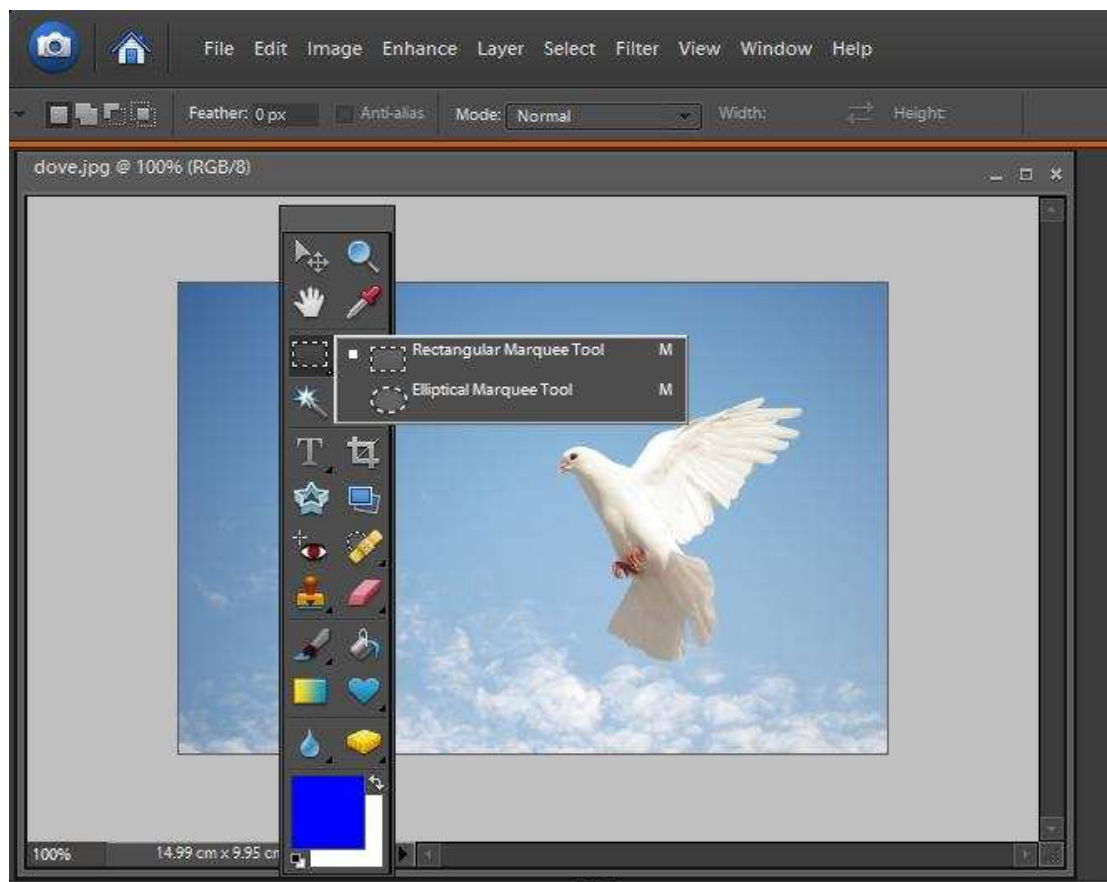
Chapter 3 – Working With Layers And Selections

That's the boring bits out of the way, now for the fun stuff. In this chapter I'll be showing you how to use most of the tools you'll find in your tool box.

Okay let's get started.



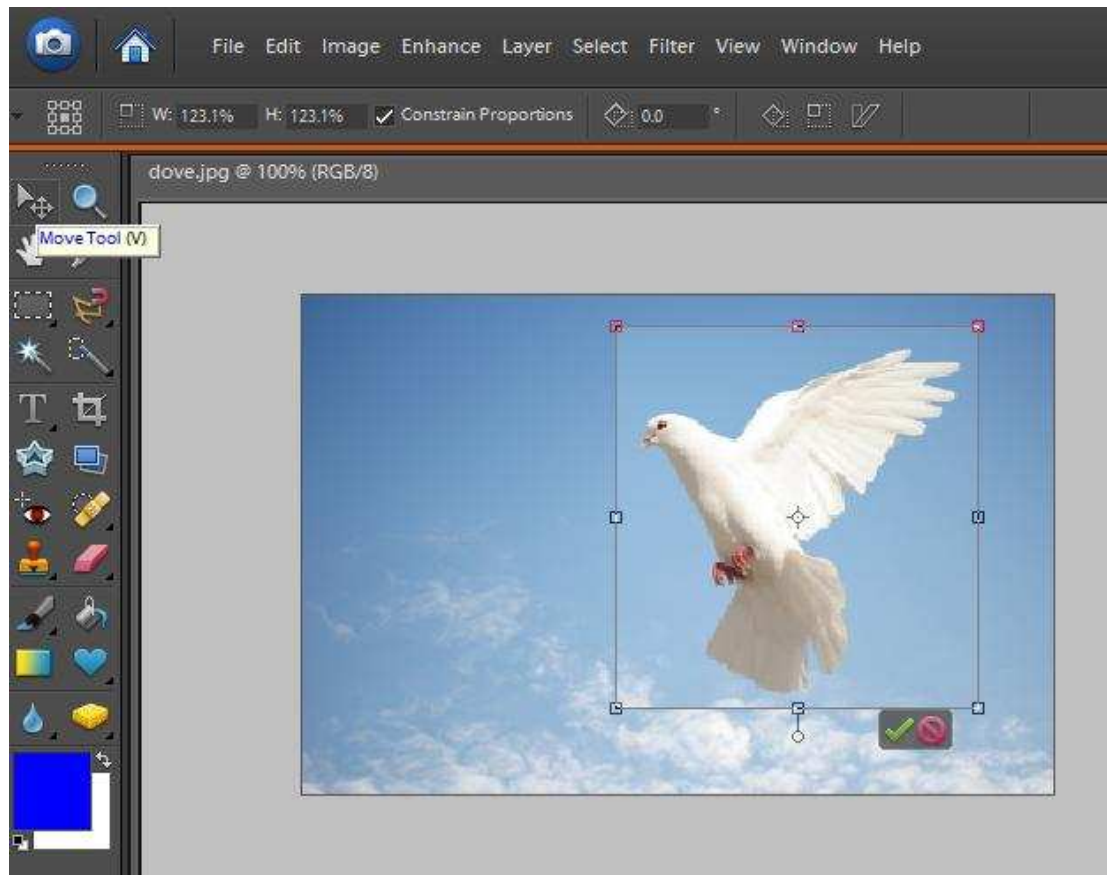
Learning About Your Selection Tools; Let's start with the basics here by using the marquee tools and they can be found in your tool box. See image below.



As you can see this gives you two options; rectangular and elliptical tools and both are used in the same manner.

If you wanted to make the dove bigger all you need to do here is select the marquee tool you wish to use, then move it around your shape to the area you're after.

Next click on the move tool and you'll get eight little squares around your image. Now you can make your image smaller or larger. Then just click on the green arrow below your image and if you're happy, you're done.



Learning About The Lasso Tools; The lasso and polygonal tools are really very basic. The lasso isn't a good choice for cutting out objects, unless you need to make a very rough selection like I have in the image.



The other variant of this tool is the polygonal tool which is much more accurate when you are selecting a straight edged object. All you need to do here is click and place your corner points by straight lines. Once you're happy and you've finished all you need to do is hover your mouse over the first point and a small circle will appear. Just click once more and that's it. As you can see from the image below all I've done is just followed the flowers around their edges.



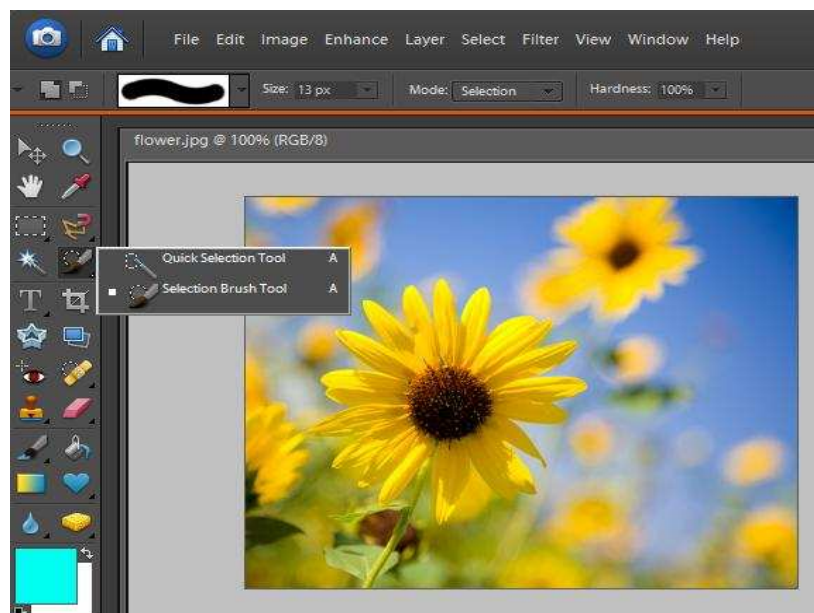
Magic Wand Tool; This tool comes into its own if you want to select colours rather than shapes in your image. Let's say we wanted to modify the sky here at the gloomy factory. You first need to select the magic wand tool, then click on your image where you need to make your alterations. If you need to select more background on your image just hold down the (Shift key) and keep clicking on your image's background.



Once you're happy just press the (Ctrl +I key) to effectively produce a negative version of the sky and if you want to invert the selection just click (Ctrl+Shift+I). Basically this just deselects the areas that were selected before. See image below for end result.

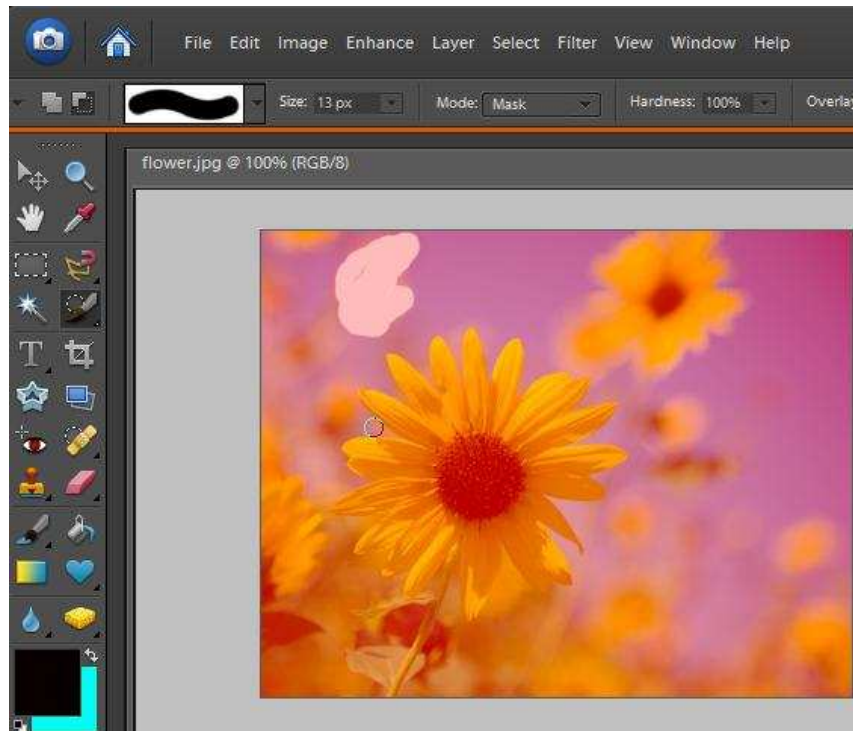


Selection Brush; The selection brush enables you to alter or modify fairly simple edges, but you'll also find it would be difficult to select with a colour tool. Next, set mode to selection and click on add to selection. See image below.



All you need to do next is choose the brush size you need and remove the unwanted waste from your selection. If you then set your mode to mask you'll see your

unselected areas are highlighted with a red overlay. Next you need to subtract from selection and this allows you to paint over the selected images from before. This turns red and removes them from your selection. If you want to add them back all you need to do here is add to selection and paint over the image again, and it adds them back. See image below.

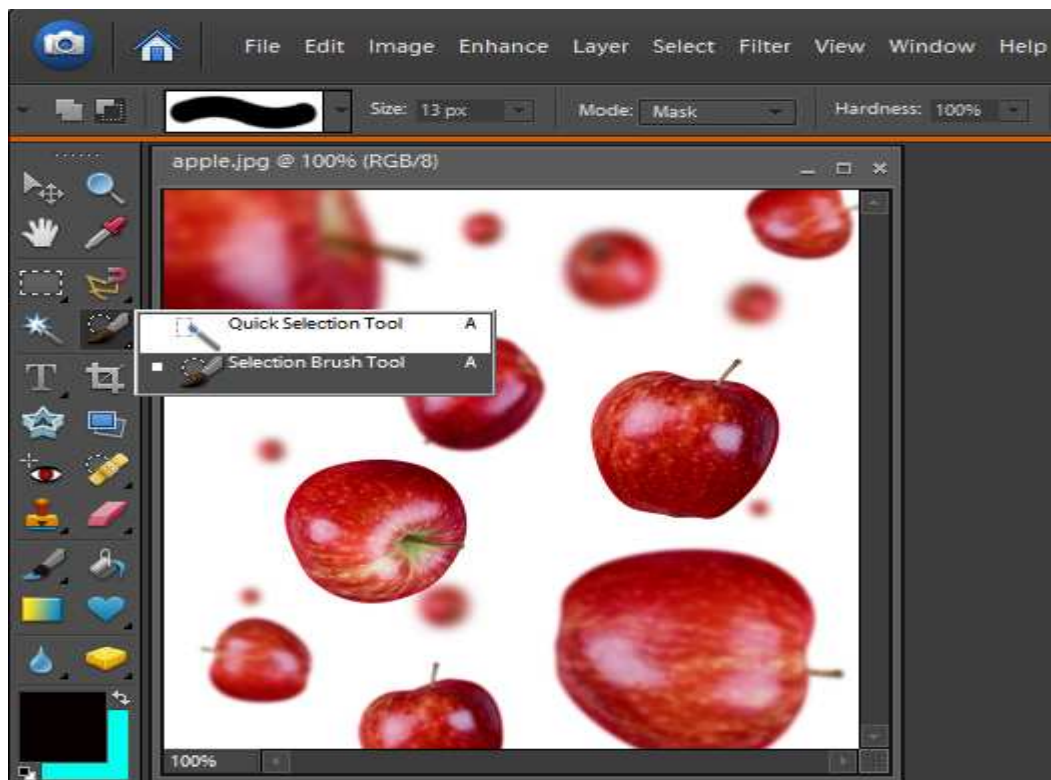


The Quick Selection Tool; With this new tool in Elements it really makes life far easier to isolate images from their background.

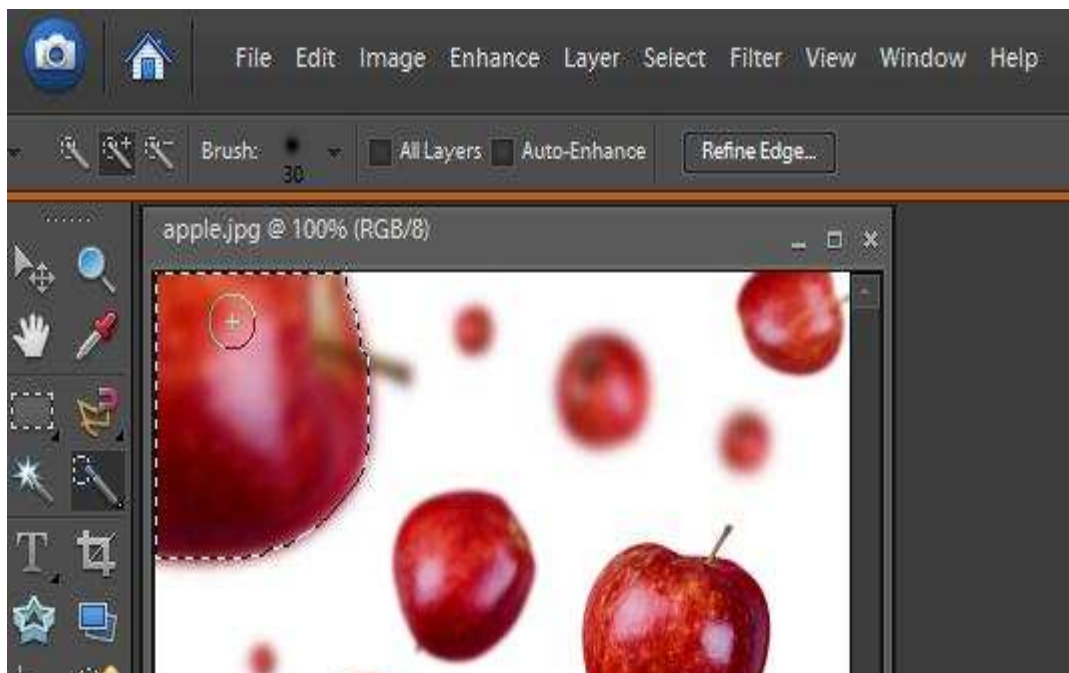
If you have never seen the quick selection tool, just think of a combination between the magic wand tool, magnetic tool with a touch of the brush tool. How cool is that.

What you will find when you're using the new tool is it creates clean selections with very little effort.

Just a quick note; when you're using the quick selection tool you'll find it works best on images or photos which contain a lot of different colours.



As you can see from the image below all I did was click on the quick selection tool and clicked on the apple which I wanted removing. What a great new feature this is.





Magic Extractor; This for me is the coolest tool within Elements. It's a life saver. Basically the magic extractor allows you to cut out anything in your image with the simplest of effort.

If you're wanting to use this, it can be found under Image menu. If you want to begin with this all you need to do is start to scribble on your subject by using the foreground tool; and then once you're happy, you just get rid of the unwanted background by using the background brush tool. Your short cut key for this is (Atl+Shift+Ctrl+V)

Quick tip here is the more you scribble out the more Elements has to work with, so you produce a higher quality image. See Image below.



Once you are happy all you need to do is click on the preview button on the right hand side and Elements will then make the alterations. You also have a touch up which can be found on the right hand side.

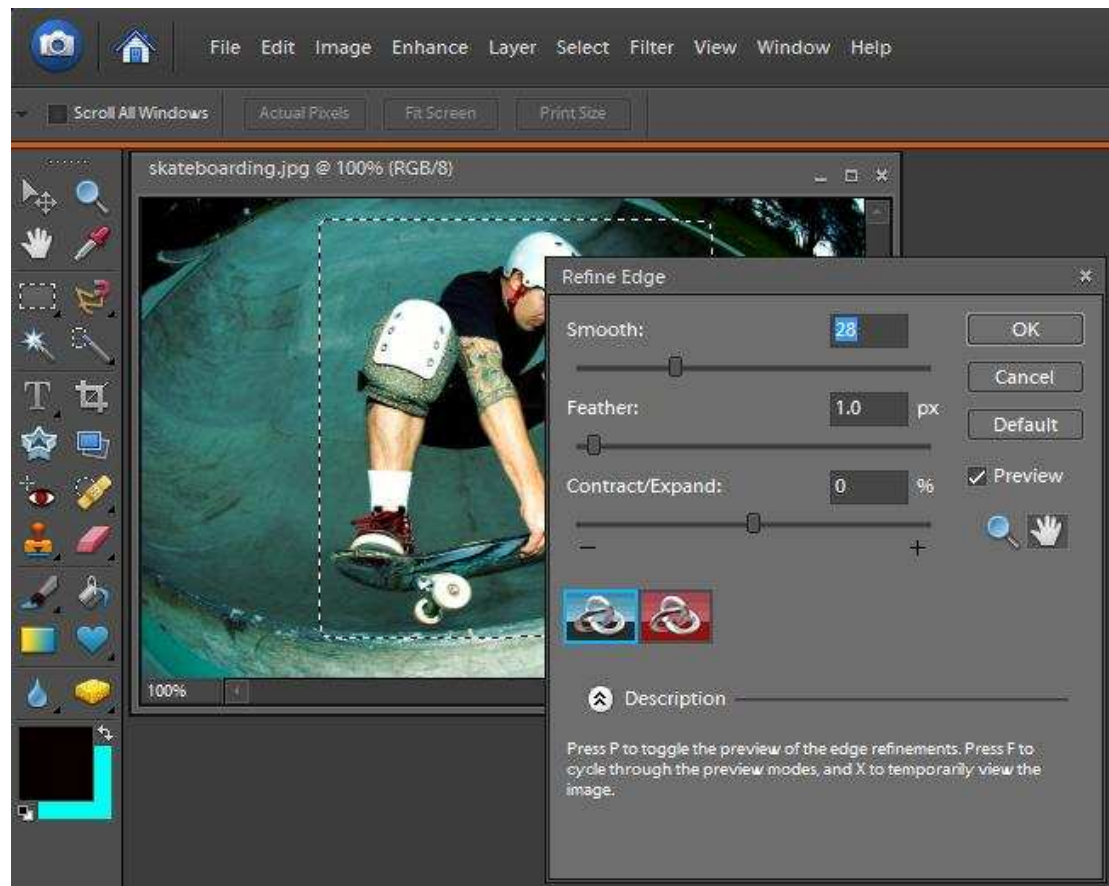


Modifying Selections; If you wish to modify a selection in Elements there is an option which can be found in the select menu in the contextual menu, which will appear once you have right clicked on your active selection.



Learning How To Use The Refine Edge Dialogue; This is new to Elements and it makes your life much easier to create your perfect selection. This new tool allows you to feather, smooth, and expand or contract the selection. Also another cool feature when you're using this, is it allows you to preview your image which you have just been working on.

If you want to use this new tool you just have to select > refine edge, but you must have a selection active for this to work. See image below.



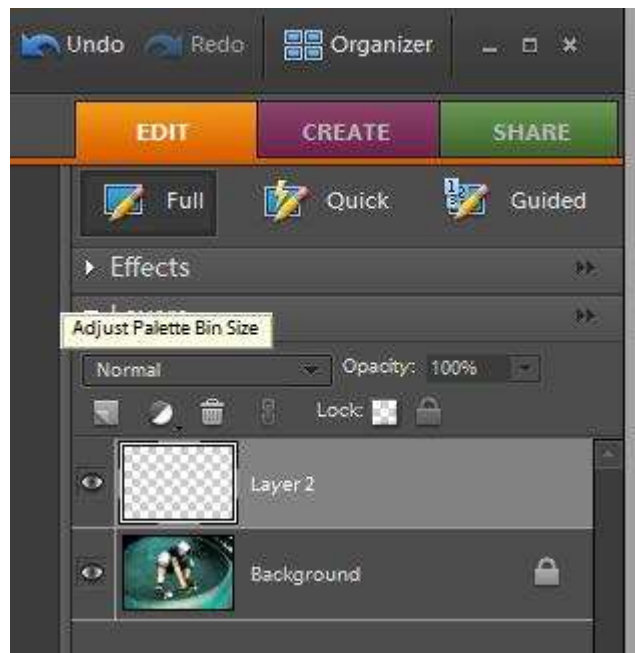
As you can see from the image above this option gives you three more options with slider bars to play around with.



Working On layers; This is where most people give up before they even try. Working with layers is very simple and really easy to understand.

You'll notice as soon as you open up any image or photo in Elements your background layer appears. Basically what we are trying to do here is add more layers onto your background layer. The more complex the image the more layers you are going to have to create.

Elements allows you to move your layers around, i.e. up or down.



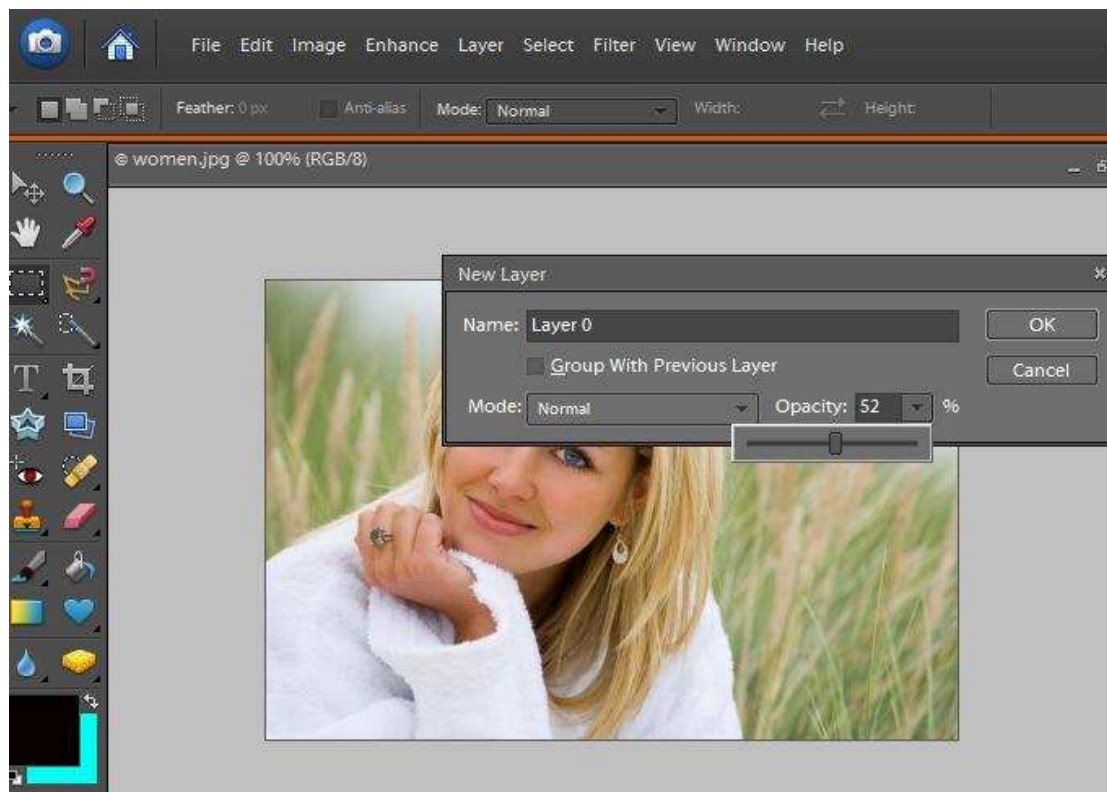
If you wish to create a new layer then you press layer > new > layer, or the short cut key is (Shift+Ctrl+N)

Another great tool in Elements is the adjustment layers and if you wish to create an adjustment layer just press on the create adjustment layers which you can find at the top in your layers palette.



Blending And Opacity; As you know layers are what make up your image. What you will find is image layers will obscure your other layers below, but if you have erased anything out from their layers, they will then show through.

With Elements they don't have to stay that way. In your layer palette you'll find an opacity menu, which has a slider. This can be set at either 0% or 100%. See image below.



If you need to use the blending mode this can be accessed in your layers palette on the right. All you need to do is click on the drop down menu in your layers tab and a fly out box appears. Then just click which design you're after. In the image below I have used colour dodge.



How To Master Type and Shape Layers; If you needed to create a caption on this image below you would need to select the rectangle tool from the tool box.



Next you need to drag and draw your shape and here I'm going to put a box on the left with a black background.

Now you need to add some text so if you click on the text tool on the left hand side and click the little arrow, you'll see a fly out box appear.

You then have the option of entering your text horizontally or vertically. Once you have added your text in you might find out it's too big. You just simply click on the little boxes and drag it inwards. See image below.



Transforming Layers; If you ever needed to transform a layer Elements has a great tool for this. With the aid of the move tool you can flip, distort or move anything you like in your image. The first thing you need to do here is make your background layer a regular layer. To do this you need to double click on your thumbnail layer and type something new.



Next you need to go image > transform > free transform, or use the shortcut keys which are (Ctrl+T). Now you can play around with your image to how you want it.

Once your image is in free transform you now have the options to skew or distort your image even flip it round. If you want to flip it around just go to image > rotate, as I have done in the image below.



Chapter 4 – Working With Colours, Lighting And Tone

Elements like Photoshop enables you to correct your colours, tones and lighting in your images or photos. In the first section of this chapter we'll be dealing with the quick fix tools which can give you a great and flawed picture.



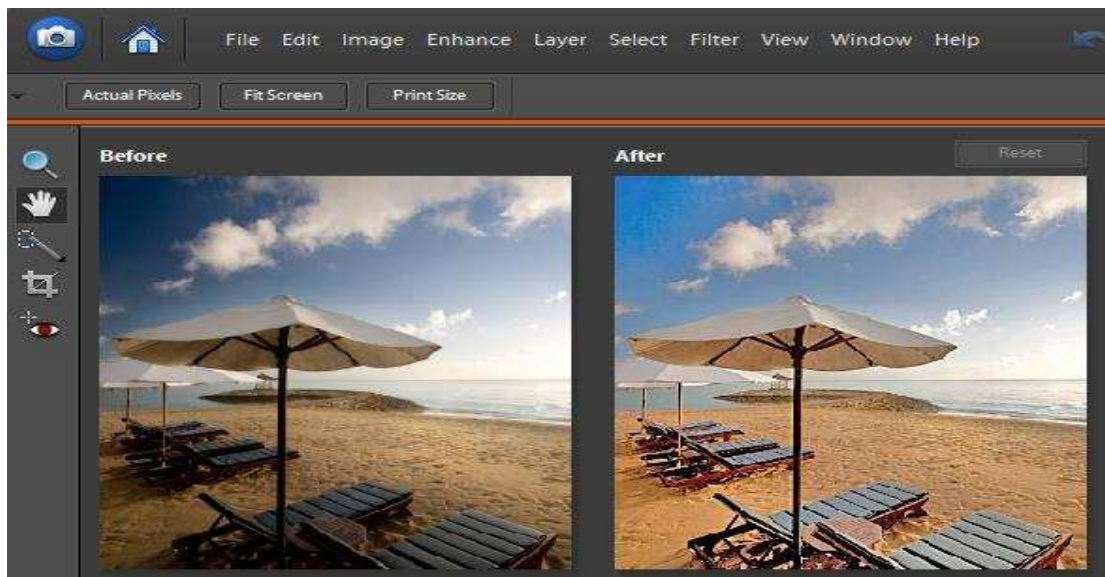
The Quick Fix; If you have a look at the photo below you'll notice that it's a little underexposed, so first we are going to try and use the auto smart fix which you'll find on the right hand side in the general fixes.



You'll find in most images or photos the auto fix doesn't do what you want it to do. So you'll have to use the lighting, colour and sharpen buttons below. You must remember when you're using the sliders not to slide them right over to the far end, as this will make you image artificial.

Another great tip here is, if you've taken a photo on an overcast day, you'll find that the temperature slider comes in handy. Also if you're after your images to pop out at you then you need to drag the saturation slider to the right a little.

Your next step once you're happy with this is to add a little sharpening to your image or photo. But remember the quick fix mode for sharpening is very crude. Next you can zoom into your image, somewhere around 50% to 100%. See Image below for before and after shot.



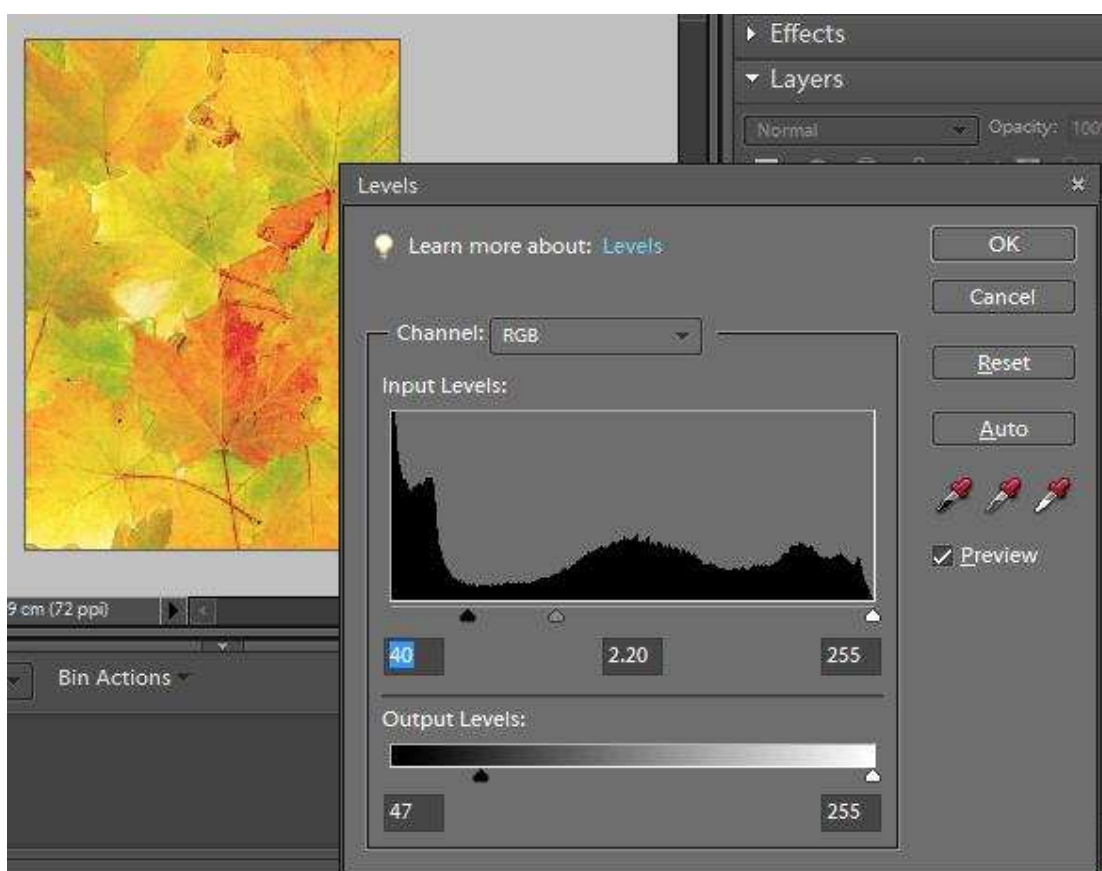


The Adjustment Levels; This levels dialogue will be your first port of call on most of your images. If you need to access this just select > enhance > adjust > lighting > levels or you can try the short cut keys (Ctrl+L).

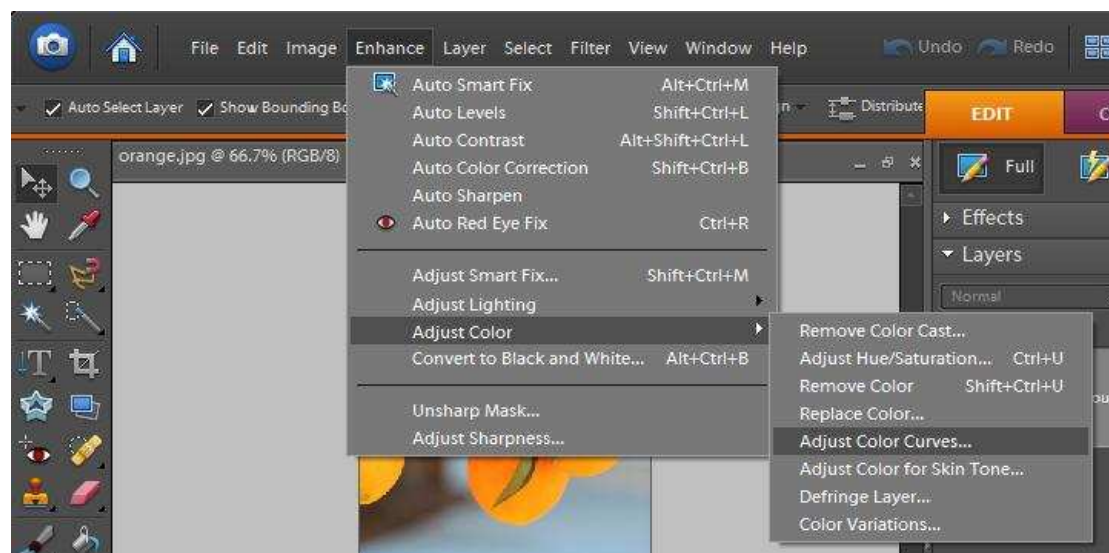
Once you have this open you'll see all the different options and in here you can alter the brightness by using the slider bars.

Also in Elements when you're using the adjustment levels, it gives you by default an auto button, which you can use and this will generally set your image correct.

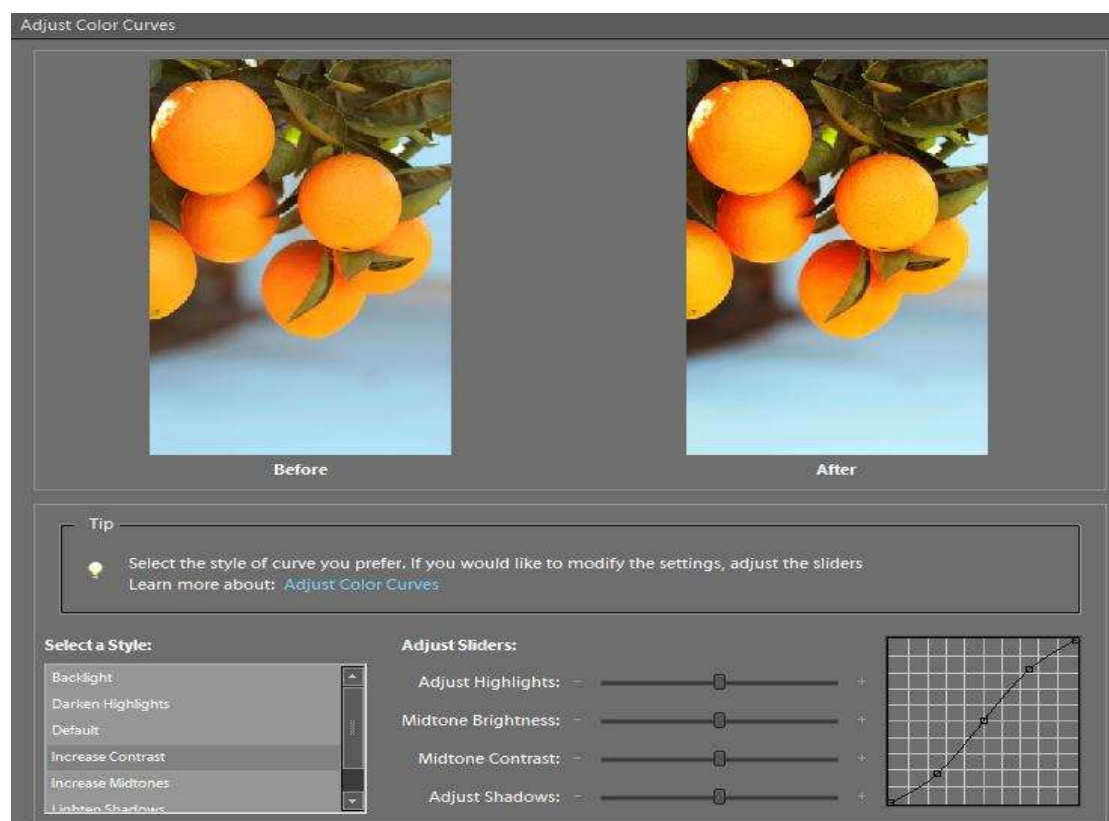
If you don't like what you have done you can always press the reset button and start from the beginning again. See image below on adjustment levels.



The Adjust Colour Curves; When you're using colour curves you'll find you can target specific parts of your image or photo tonal range. What you do find when you're using the colour curves is it's more to do with the brightness. To access this select > enhance > adjust colour sub-menu.



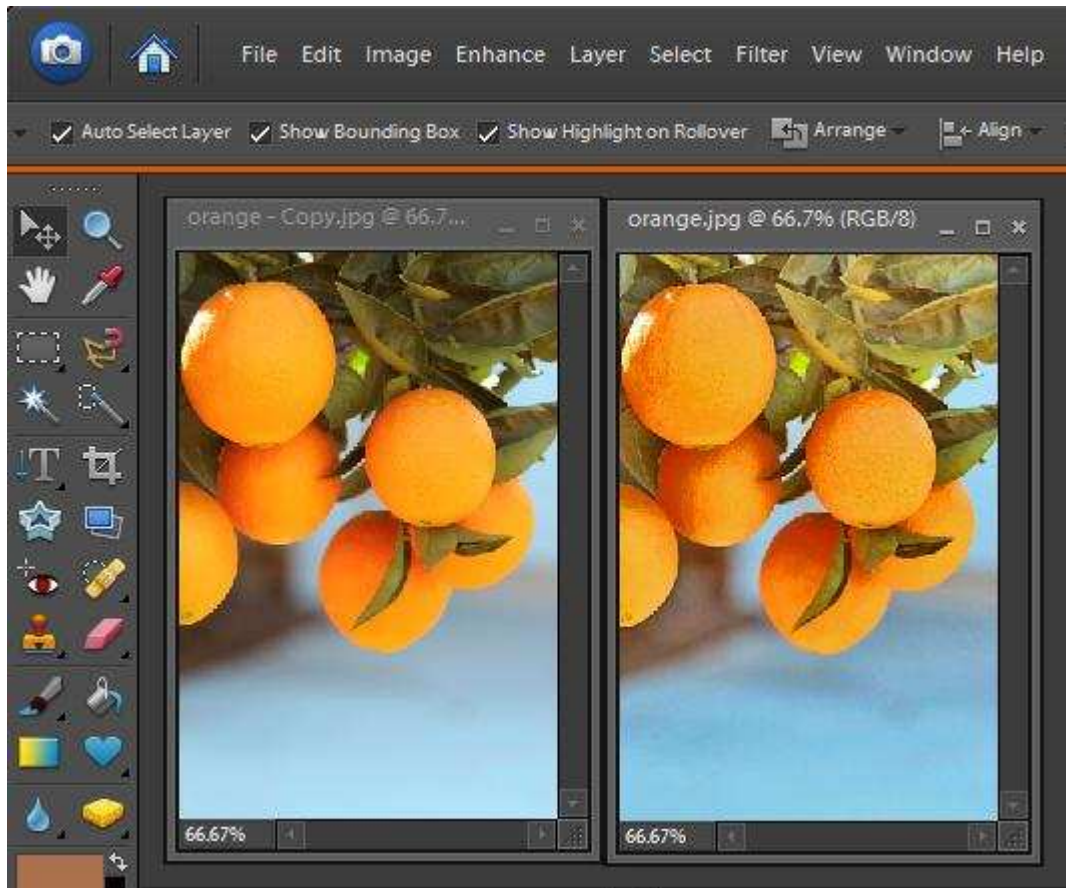
Once you have chosen the adjust colour curves, you'll find it gives a load of different options. You'll find at the bottom left hand corner you can view your image in seven different styles. If you're not happy with any of these then you are given the options with the sliders bars. You will have to play around with this to get the best from your image or photo. See image below for before and after shot.





How To Adjust Your Shadows And Highlights Dialogue; This is another great tool in the Elements arsenal and here you can alter your shadows, highlights and contrast. To access this you need to go to enhance > adjust lighting > shadows/highlights.

You'll find this very useful when you have an image which has been taken on a sunny day and it leaves you with shadows. See the before and after image from within the shadows and highlights.



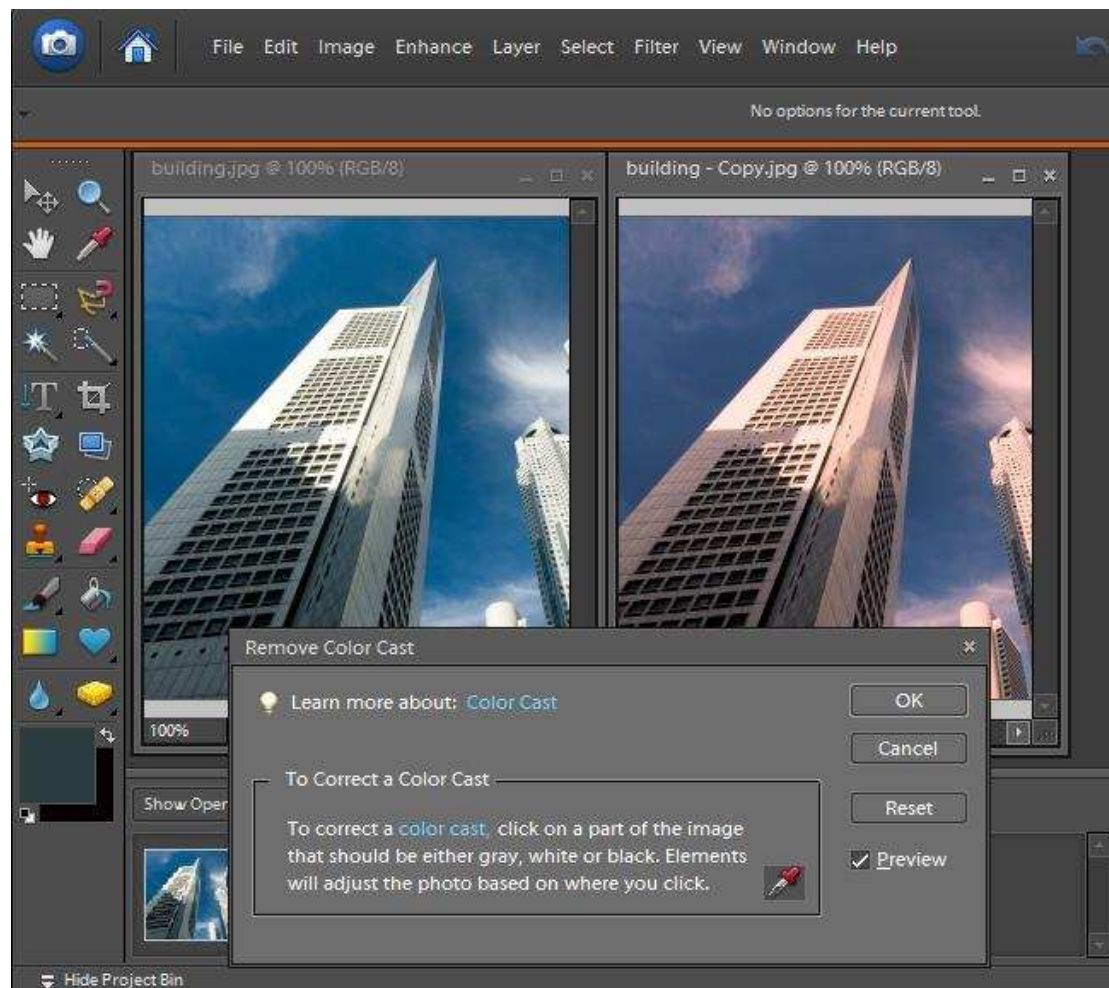
How To Correct Colour Cast; You'll find when you have taken some photographs that your colour on your photo just doesn't look right. In Elements there's a great little tool called remove colour cast.

To find this you'll need to go to enhance > adjust colour > remove colour cast.

When your using the remove colour cast you'll notice a flout box appears, which contains a single set grey point eyedropper.

Now you need to find an area on your image which is colour neutral grey. Click on it and the colour through out your image will change.

You may notice at first your image doesn't look right so to get the satisfactory result you're looking for, you'll have to click around your image. In the image below I have done a before and after shot for you.

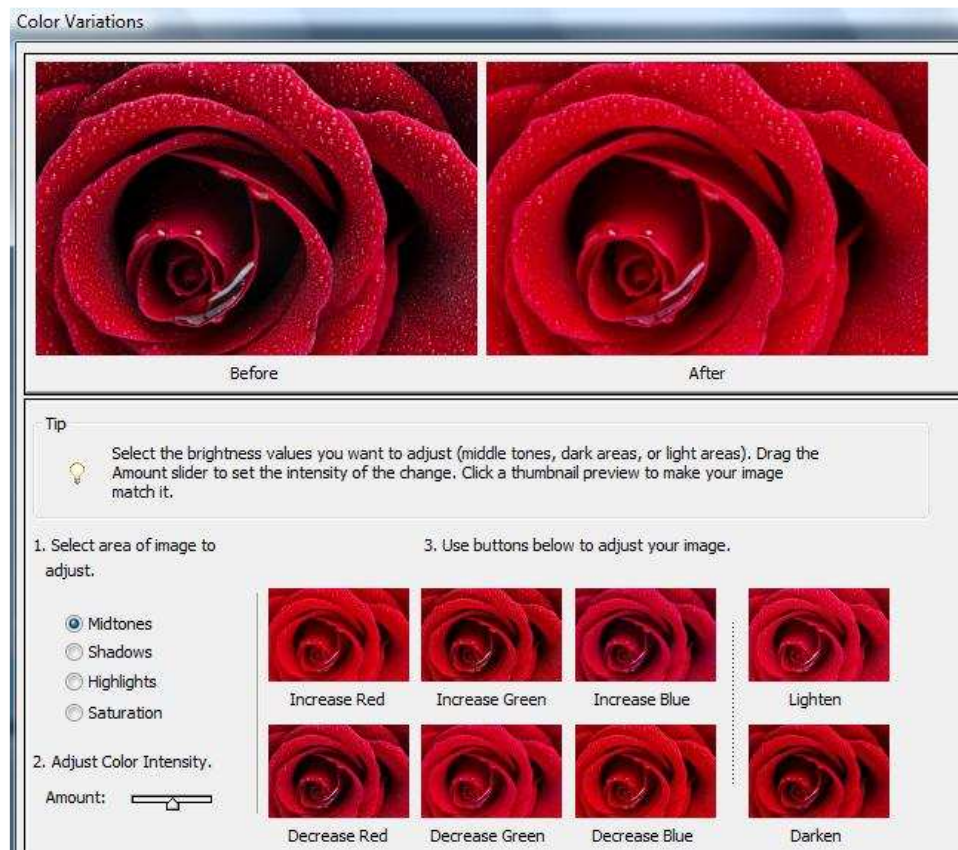


Colour Variations; Finding the right colour for your image or photo can and will be sometimes a little tricky. In Elements there is another great tool called colour variations.

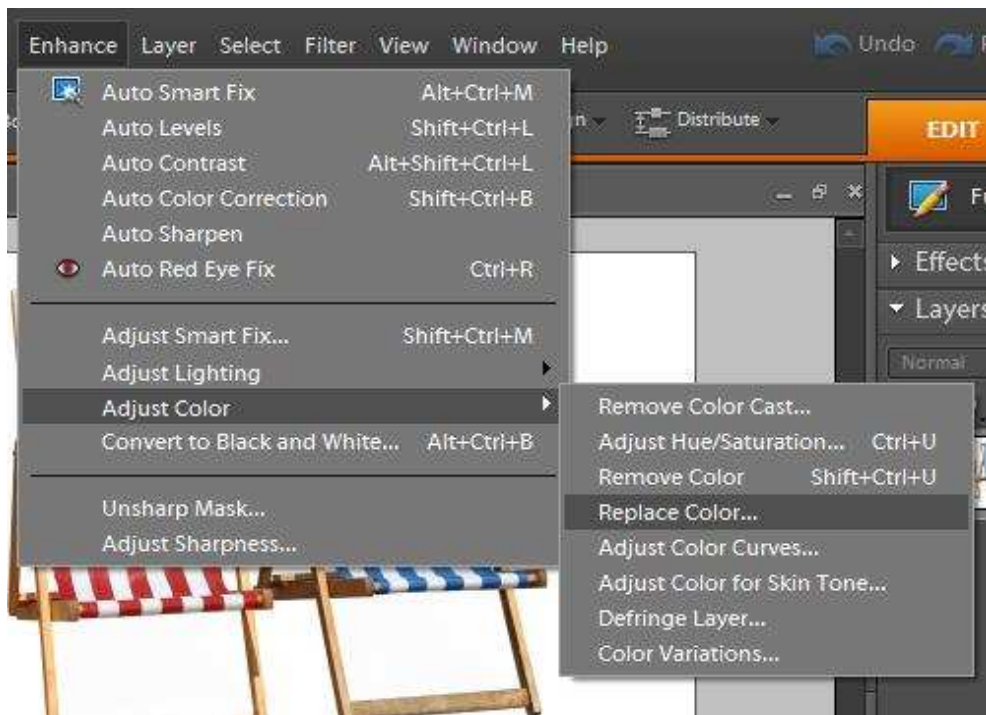
To access this you'll need to go to enhance > adjust colour > colour variations.

Once you've opened up your colour variations tool you'll notice it gives you a before and after shot of your image. Also to the bottom left you'll see you have four options; midtones > shadows > highlights > saturation. Underneath that you'll also see a slider bar for colour intensity.

To the right it gives you different brightness or darkness images to choose from. Again to get the best results you'll have to play around with them. See image below for end result



How To Replace Colours; Replacing colours in any image is really so cool and the end result can look fantastic. To use this you'll need to go to enhance > adjust colour > replace colour.

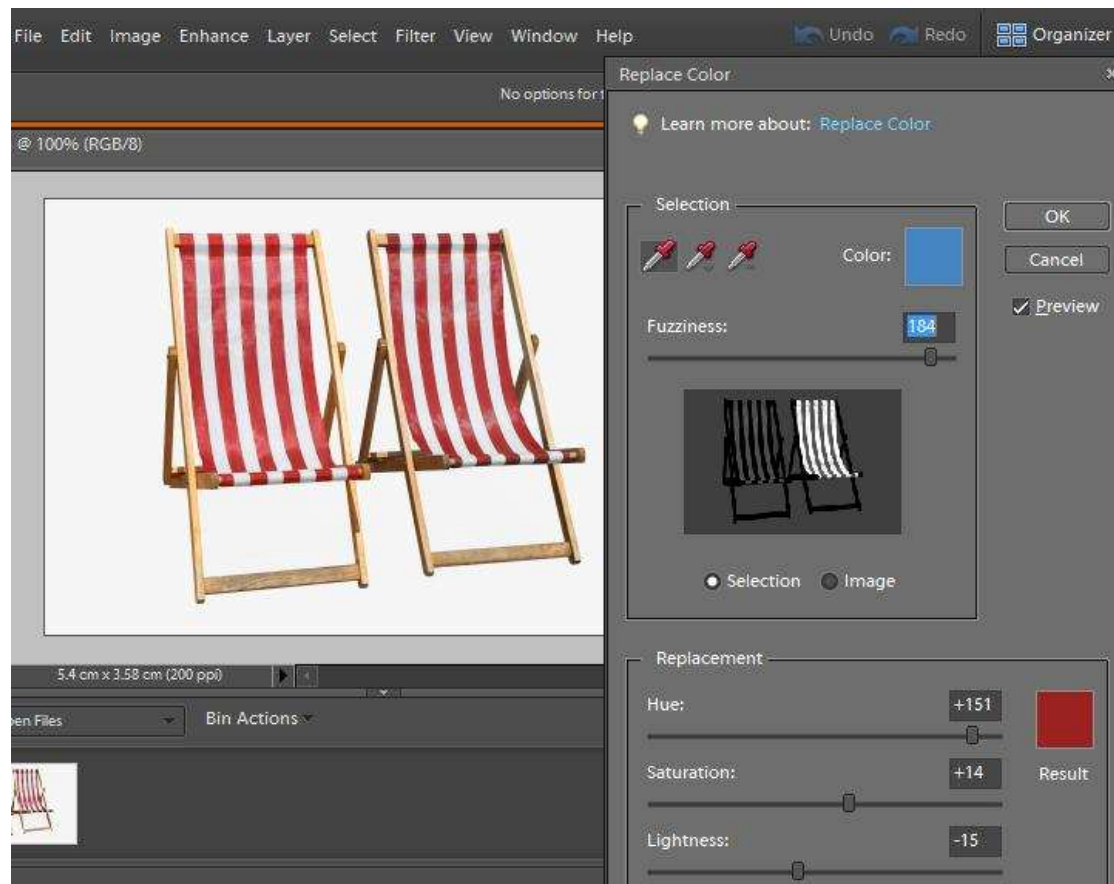


As you can see in the image above we have two deckchairs, one is red the other is blue. Let's say we wanted to change the blue deckchairs to red, you'd need to open up your replace colour.

You'll notice there are three eye droppers, the left hand one is your default one. If you need to make a more complex colour change you would use the slider bar. Now all you need to do is click on the blue deckchair and select your colour.

To do this you need to click on the colour box next to the eyedroppers. After you have done this select the lower colour box to the bottom right and select your colour. You will find that you'll need to use the fuzziness slider bar to give you the best result.

See Image below.

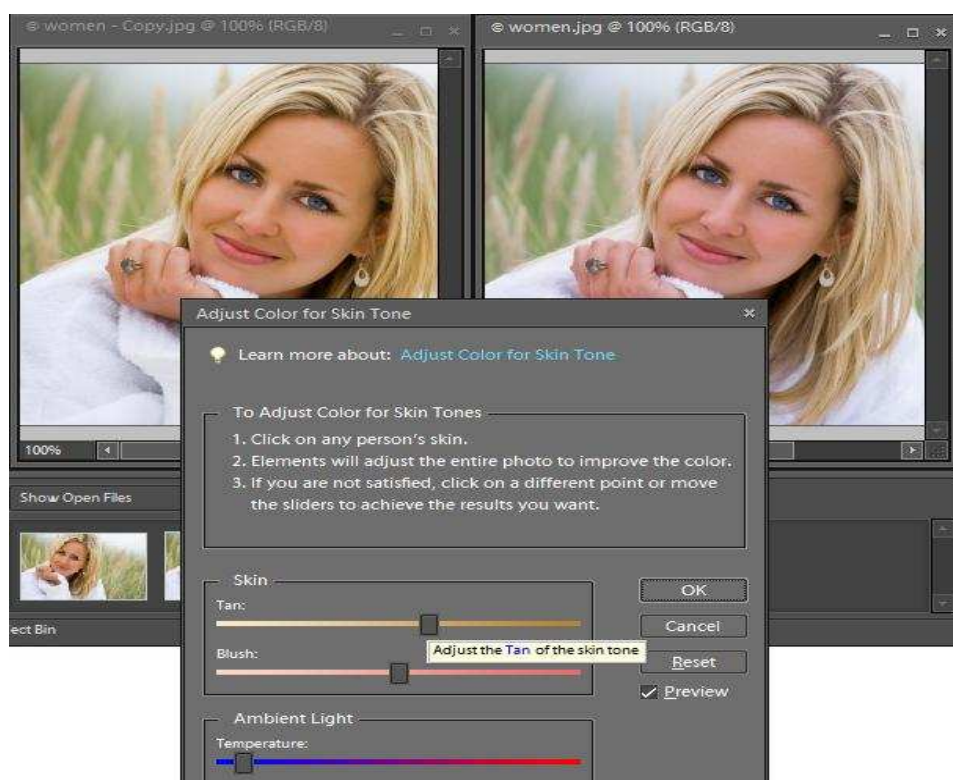


Different Colour Adjustments; In Elements you'll find that there are other ways to change the colour in your images or photos. One is by using your levels or the adjust colour curves and the other is hue/saturation.

You'll find this in enhance > adjust colour > hue/saturation colour, or the short cut key is (Ctrl+U). See image below



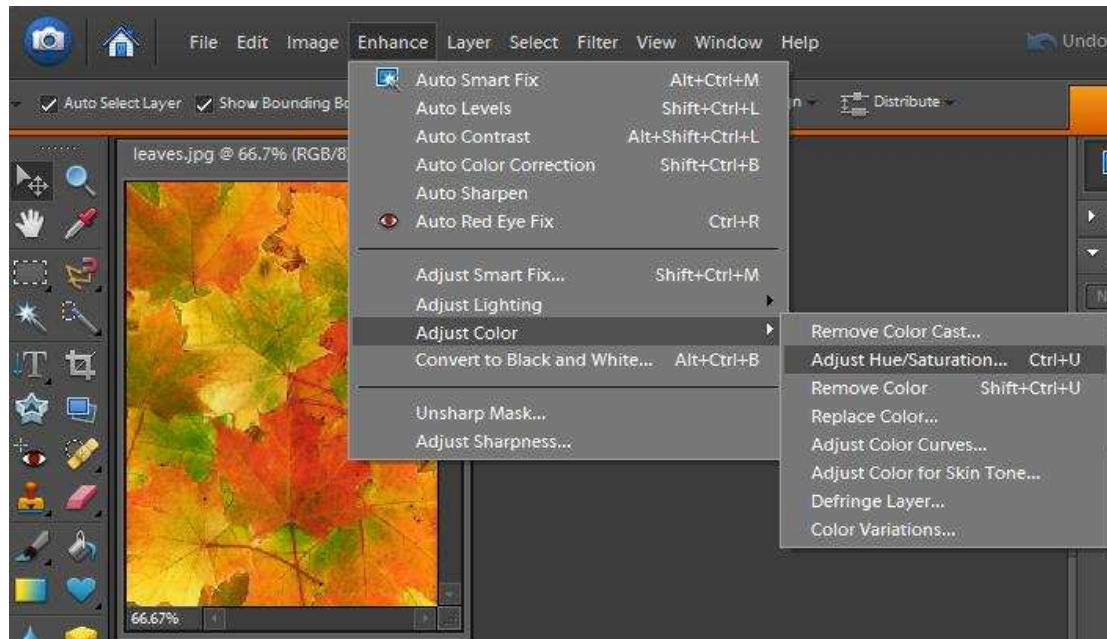
If you would like to change the colour a portrait the best tool for this would be skin tone dialogue. You'll find this under enhance > adjust colour > adjust colour for skin tone. The image below shows you the before and after portraits





How To Use Hue/Saturation; When you come to use the Hue/Saturation dialogue you'll find this is best used on a targeted colour rather than the whole image or photo.

You'll find this under enhance > adjust colour > adjust hue/saturation. I must warn you that when you do use this, the hue and lightness sliders can do more harm than good to your image. But you can get some really great effects out of it.



How To Create Mono Image; I love this tool for converting your coloured image to black and white is so cool and the end results can be so stunning. You'll notice that all the new cameras have a black and white setting; which is cool, but I always find it best to shoot in colour and then change later. This way you have the best of both worlds.

You'll find the great tool under enhance > convert to black and white. The short cut key for this is (Alt+Ctrl+B)

Once you're in convert to black and white you'll notice a great selection of different styles on your left and you'll also notice an adjustment intensity to your right. You will have to play around with the settings to get the best result. See image below.



Learning About Raw Files And Images; You'll find now most cameras save RAW files. If you need to open a RAW image up, by default the ACR (adobe camera raw) dialogue box will appear.

You can alter and touch up your images or photos with the ACR tools before you open it up in Elements.

Once open, you'll notice there are more different options which are given to you. You will have to play around with the sliders to the right on your image until you find the best result. Once you're happy you can save your image as a DNG (digital negative). The good thing about this DNG files are that they don't take as much space up on your hard drive.

You can open your image or photo up in Elements now and work on it if it needs anything doing to it, plus you can now save it as a TIFF JPEG or PSD.

Chapter 5 – Retouching And Correcting Your Images

As all digital photographers know digital cameras can take some amazing photos, but sometimes your photos just fall short of being perfect. Elements has all the tools necessary to make your photo perfect.

Okay, let's get started and let's get to grips with most of the everyday tools you'll be using.



Levelling Your Image By Cropping; Even professional photographers don't get all their photos correct the first time. In fact I would say that over 95% of the use of Photoshop or Elements is to correct their images, so you're not alone with this. Once you have your photos in a folder you'll notice that some of your photos might have looked better if you'd have shot it differently. Either it might have been better zooming in more, or you need to crop your photo, or even rotating your photo.

What you'll also find is that most digital cameras have a ratio of 4:3 which means; (4 units wide by 3 units high) the standard print size is 6x4, which is a ratio of 3:2 (3 units wide by 2 units high). You can alter your image or photo in the aspect ratio dialogue. See image below



If you need to crop your image or photo to a specific size you can. Just open up the aspect ratio dialogue and to do this you need to click on image > crop. If you look at the top you'll see a width and a height box and you can work these in inches or centimetres. For inches just type in "in" and for centimetres just type in "cm".

Personally I never enter anything in the resolution box, the reason being Elements automatically re-samples your image or photo. As you can see in the image below I have cropped and sized my image to fit aspect ratio of 2.5 x 2 in.



Final outcome of the cropped image below.





How To Resize An Image; Resizing an image or a photo is really quite simple. All you need to do is select > image > resize > image resize dialogue.

A great tip here is; If you leave the re-sample image option disabled you just resize your image or photo, but if you make click the option to enable the image or photo you'll make the pixels spread out more.

If you look at the image below you'll see the one to the right has been resized with the re-sample image box ticked, and the one to the left has just been resized without it being ticked.



How To Change Your Canvas Size On Your Photo;

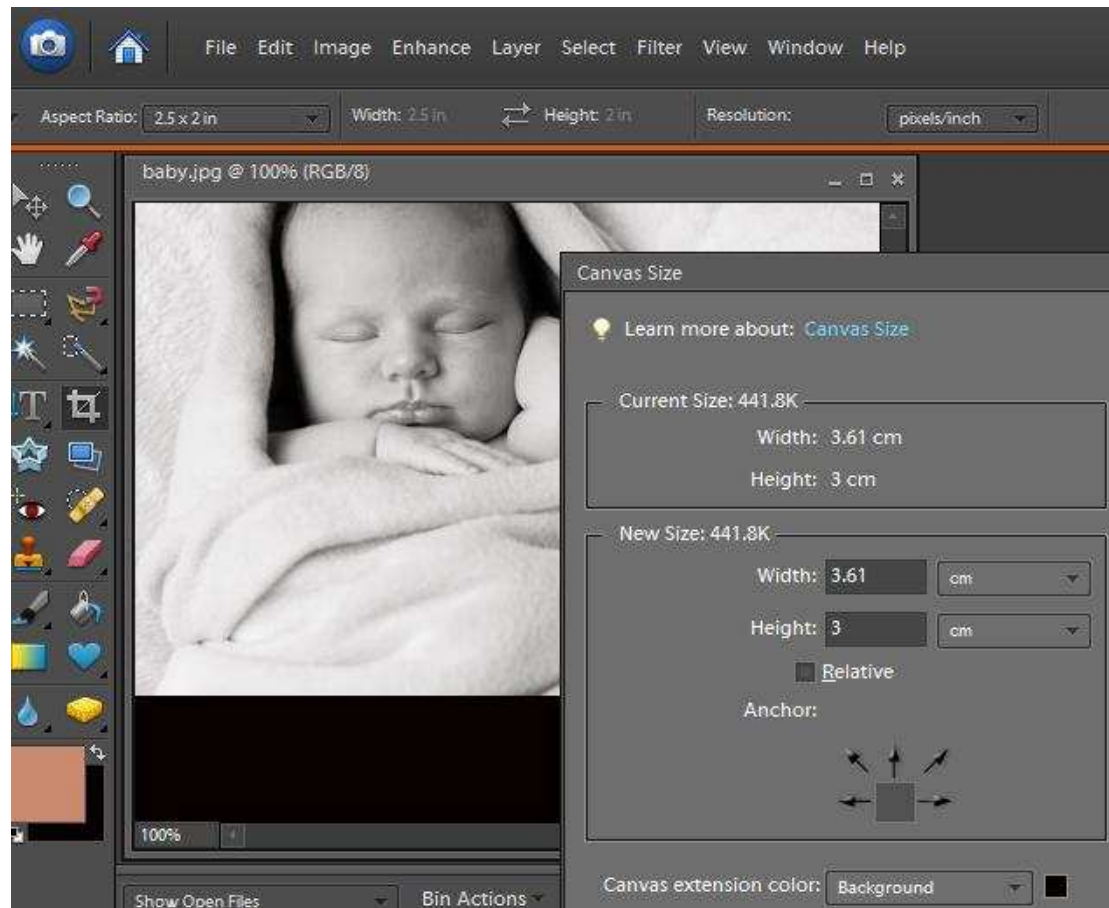
You'll find 99.9% of the time your canvas fits your image or photo size, unless the canvas size has already been altered.

Altering your canvas size is a great way of adding text to the bottom of your image or photo. To do this you'll need to select image > resize > canvas size.

There are two ways you can do this. If you add more canvas you can add text or anything extra to your image or photo or you can make your canvas smaller as all this will do is cut off parts of your image or photo.

Once you have selected the canvas resize, you'll see it gives you three options... canvas size, new size, anchor and canvas colour change.

Again you'll to play around with the options to find what suits your image the best. The image below I have just made the bottom canvas bigger and changed the canvas colour to black but I could add some text in there if I wanted to.



Cloning And Healing; You'll find when you have taken photos that you'll have some form of blemish, objects or distractions in your image or photo.

Elements gives you three great tools to remove these. Clone stamp tool which I'll cover next, the spot healing brush and the healing brush. Each one has its own purpose.

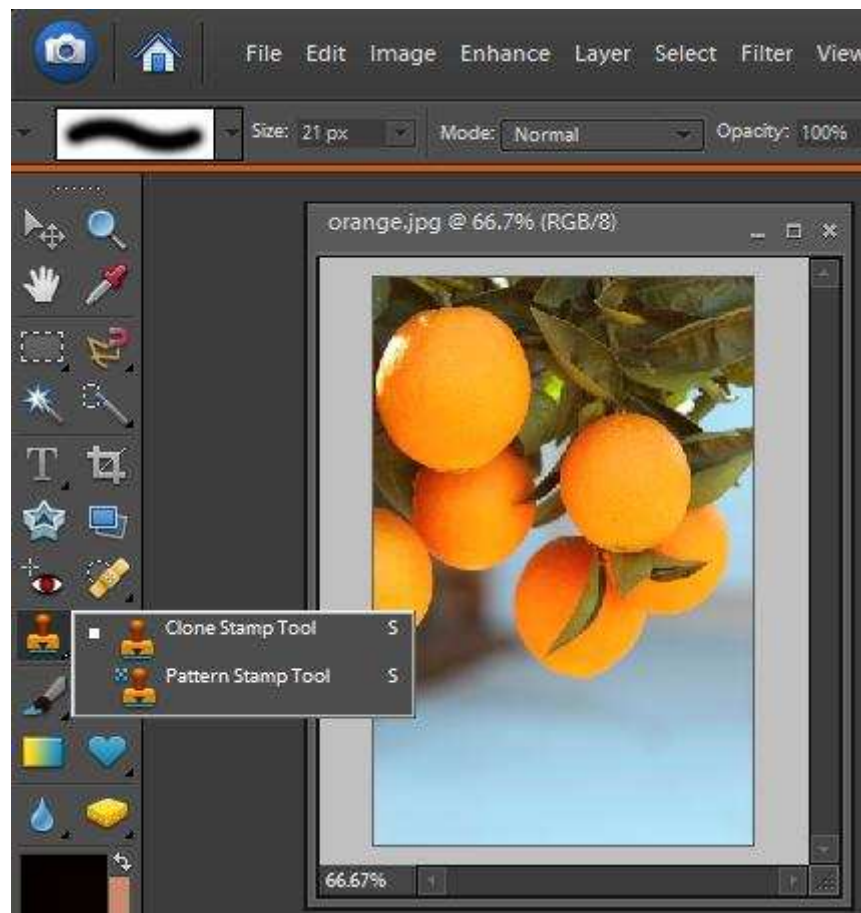
You can find the tools to the right in your tool box. In the image below you'll see a black mark to the left of the dove and by using the stop healing brush we can make this magically disappear.



You could use either to remove the black spot, but in this case I used the spot healing brush. Your next step is to choose the correct size of brush which can be found in the top left hand corner. Then just click on the black spot with your spot healing brush and it magically disappears. See Image below for end result. It really is that simple.



In the next example I'm going to use the cloning tool as mentioned before. Again the cloning tool can be found in your tool box on the right. See image below.



In the image above we'll be using the clone stamp tool to get rid of the shadow under the oranges on the left. We start off by selecting the clone stamp tool then select your brush size. Next you'll need to (Alt)-click to define this as your source. The clone stamp tool uses this as your sample pixel.

There are two ways to do this, either dabbing or brush strokes. You might find that some times you'll need to define another area source to clone from to finish off your completed image.

When you come to the tricky bits, it's best to use your polygonal lasso tool and carefully select the area and it's always best here to use the zoom. Next you'll need to reduce your brush size and this will help you clone the tricky parts. I haven't finished off the full cloning in this image, but I think you will get my drift.

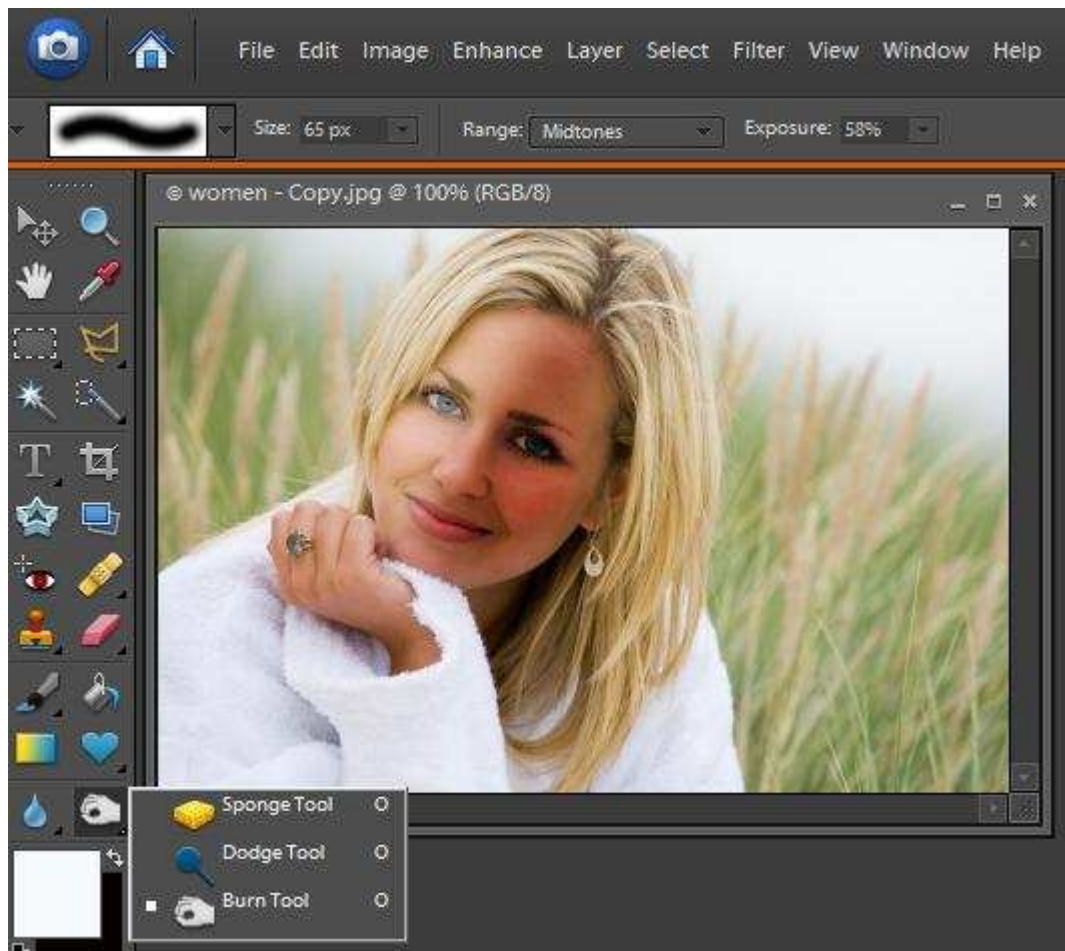


Using The Dodge And Burn Tool; The dodge and burn tool can be used to create greater contrast on your images by lightening or darkening areas.

The dodge tool lightens your images, while the burn tool makes it darker. To access the tool you'll need to click on the tool box on the right hand side and if you go right down to the bottom, it is the last tool in the tool box on the left hand side.

Next you'll have to select the right size brush and also the range and exposure. The range has three different options which you can choose from; shadows, midtones and highlights. The exposure works on a slider bar and you can move this from left to right. Again you'll have to play around with this to get the best results from it.

In the image below I have done half of the women's face with the burn tool and the other half with the dodge tool.



How To Sharpen Up Your Images; Another great feature within Elements is the adjust sharpness dialogue. You'll find this under enhance > adjust sharpness.

What you need to understand is this tool won't get rid of camera shake or bad focusing.

Once inside adjust sharpness you'll see the setting menu. The options are; amount, radius, remove. Remove has a drop down menu which gives you three options; Gaussian blur, lens blur and motion blur. Also you have a check box for more refined.

Again like everything else in Elements, to get the best results from your images or photos you'll have to play around with the settings. In the image below I have altered the image on the right with the adjust sharpening tool.



How To Fix Red Eye; This is an old classic and red eye can easily be fixed in Elements. In fact Elements allows you to fix red eye with several different options.

If you have downloaded Adobe photo downloader you'll notice you have automatically fix red eye in the advanced options. Or in your organizer you can select edit > auto red eye fix. Another way to fix red eye is select enhance > auto red eye fix, the short cut key for this is (Ctrl+R).

You can even use the removal tool in your tool box and this can be used in both modes; quick fix mode and full mode.

When I need to fix a red eye I normally use the auto red eye fix, this works 99% of the time.



How To Photo merge Group Shots; This for me has to be one of the coolest new tools in Elements. Photo merging has been a bit part in Photoshop and it's about time they transferred it into Elements.

If you want to use photo merging it's best to have at least three or more images and this way you can merge them together and get the best result. To use photomerge you'll have to open organizer, then select > fix > guided edit > photomerge (it's at the bottom). Here photomerge gives you two options... group shot or faces.

Here we are going to use group shot. By default photomerge automatically will auto align your selected images to match perspective and scale as closely as possible.

After this has been completed you'll then drag the best shot into the final box (which is the one on the right). Now click on your other image, select the pencil tool, which you'll find on the right and draw a rough outline area. If you're happy just click the done button and Elements automatically photomerges your images together.

In the image below I have copied one of my original images in to show you the difference.



Chapter 6 – Effects, Text, Artistic And Design

In this chapter I'll be showing you how to turn your images or photos into paintings and also I'll be showing you how to add some very stylish text and graphics.



How To Add Frames, Artwork And Effects; In Elements you'll find that you can add special effects and frames to your images or photos. To do this you'll need two palettes (Contents and Effects). If you want to add a

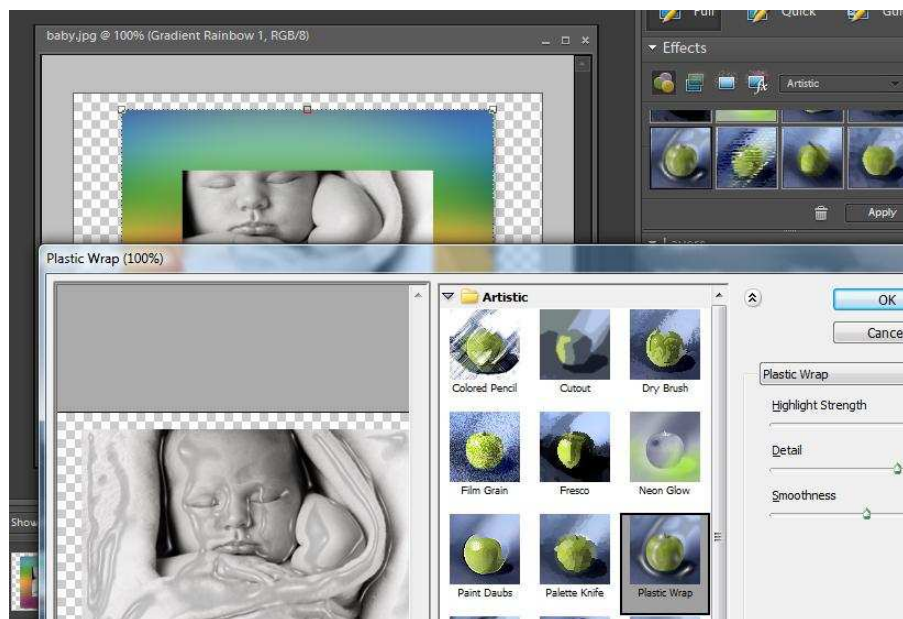
frame to your image you'll need to open the contents palette and once opened you'll see the drop down menus; By Type and Background.

Now all you need to do is choose your frame from the right hand drop down menu and add it to your photo and to do this all you need to do is drag and drop it.

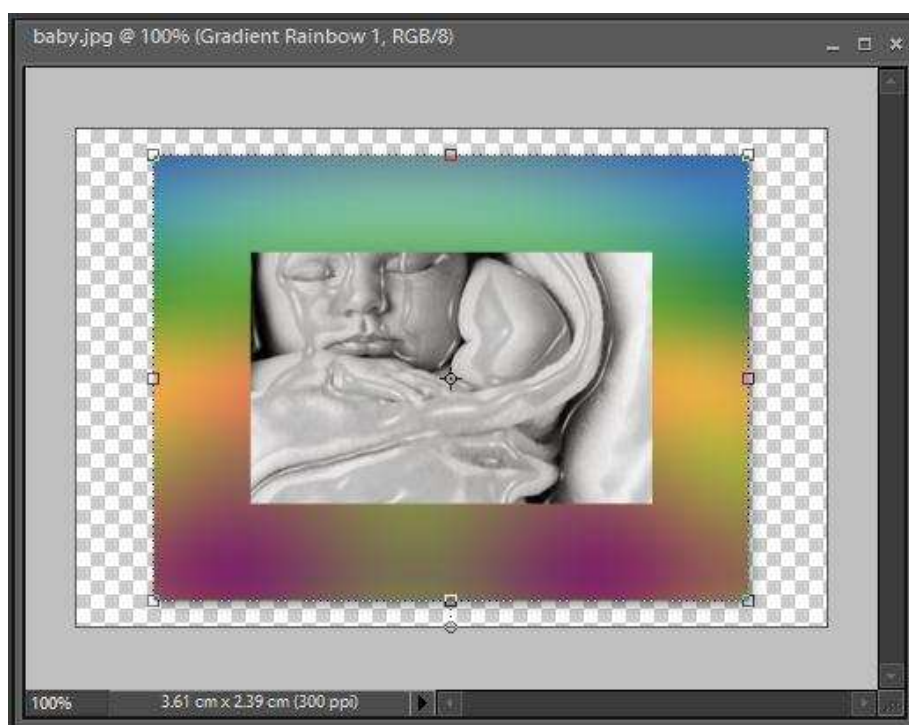


If you wanted to add a background to this image all you would do is click on the drop down menu and select backgrounds, then just drag and drop it onto your image.

Next you'll need to click on the effects palette and here you'll be given different types of effect filters. You'll also notice another drop down menu in your effects palette. This gives you fourteen options on how you can change your image, i.e.- Blur, brush strokes, sketch, artistic...etc. If you look in the image below I have chosen artistic and plastic wrap. You will have to play around in here to find the settings for you image.



Then just click the apply button, and that's it.





How To Create Themed Designs; In Elements your content palette allows you to create themed designs. For you to design something like this, all you need to do is open your content palette. In the first drop down menu choose by colour and in the second drop down menu choose beige. This will then give you a choice of background and in the image below I have chosen “Beach With Seashell”



Next we can add a frame into your “Beach With Seashell” design and all you need to do here is pick a frame out and drag and drop it. You can alter the size of the frame by clicking on the little boxes in the corners.

Next we can add a photo from our photo bin and again all you need to do here is drag and drop. Once the image is in the box you can use your slider to make it larger or smaller and you can also tilt your image by pressing on the round circle in the middle.

Once you're happy just click on the theme to finish. You can also add some text in here if you like and to do this just select the text tool. I have chosen the horizontal text here, but it's up to you how you want your text to look.

Don't forget when you're using the text tool that you can alter the size, colour, boldness, font family, warp text, as I have done in the image below.

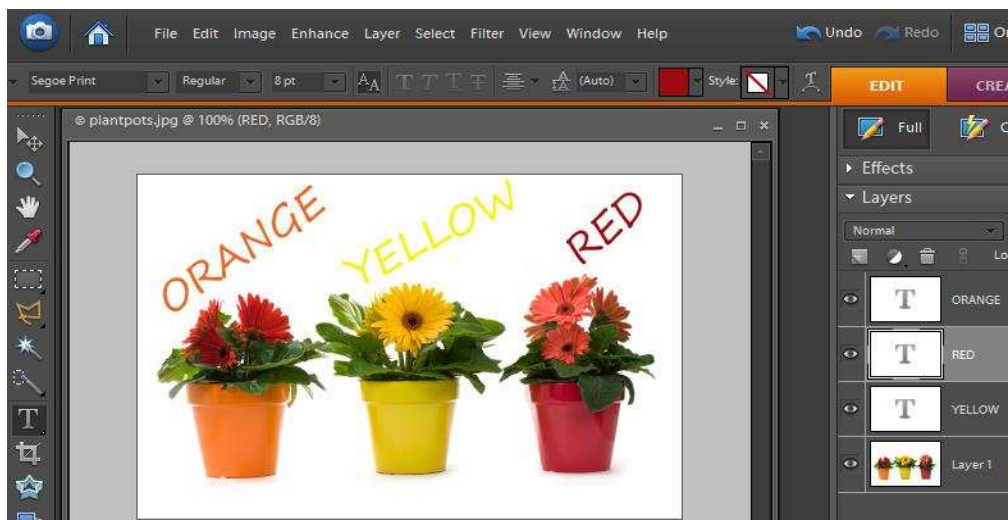


How To Add Text; We covered a little bit about text in “Create Themed Designs”. In this example I’ll be showing you how to add text to different layers so you can alter it if and when you need to.

First I’ve altered the name on the first layer and called it layer 1. Then I’ve chosen my text, changed the colour, and twisted it a little using the little boxes. Next we need to add the yellow text. By default in the layers palette to the right you’ll see a new layer called yellow, which is under the orange layer.

Now for the final bit of text above the red plant and again we are going to add some text and change the colour to red. As you’ll notice again in the layers palette, it has automatically added another layer calling it red.

Now we have the four in the layers palette you now have the options of altering any of the layers. All you need to do now is just on the layer which you want to alter. See image below.



How To Add Layer Styles; Adding a layer style for frame effects is very simple to do. But first you'll need to change the background layer and rename it. Just double click the layer to rename. Next you need to have your effects palette open for this. First you'll have to "cut out an image" and float it in its own layer. Then in the effects palette you'll see a drop down menu, select > drop shadows, so click the one you want and press apply and then drag it to your image. See image below

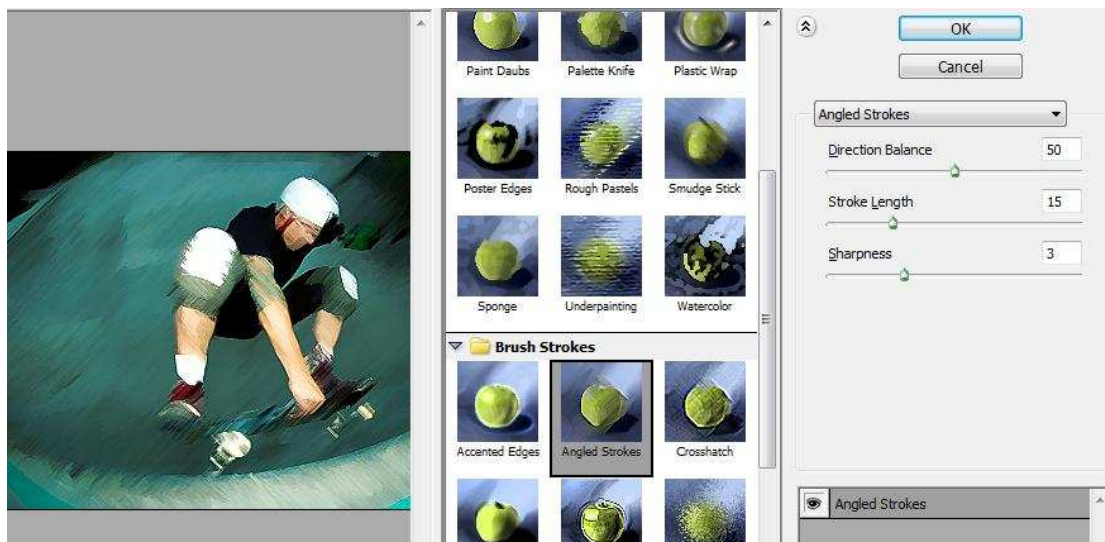




Filter Gallery; When you're using Elements you'll find the filter gallery is the most popular feature that you'll use. To use the filter gallery you'll have to open the effects palette then you'll see three little coloured circles. Just click on that and the filter gallery opens up.

Also you'll see another drop down menu and this has all your different types of effects in i.e. blur, sketch, etc. Every time you choose a new effect it replaces the old one. Once you have chosen an effect you'll also be given more options on the right with slider bars.

Here you can play around more to alter your image. Once you're happy just click on the okay button. In the image below I have chosen "brush strokes > angled strokes"



Artistic Filters; Using the artistic filters is the same as using the filter gallery above, but all you need to do here is select artistic from the drop down menu in the effects palette.

In the image below I have used the dried brush effect.



 **Adjustment Filters;** Using the adjustment filters is very simple, but you will have to experiment with the filters to find the right effect for your images or photos. The adjustment filters can be found under filter > adjustment > photo filter.

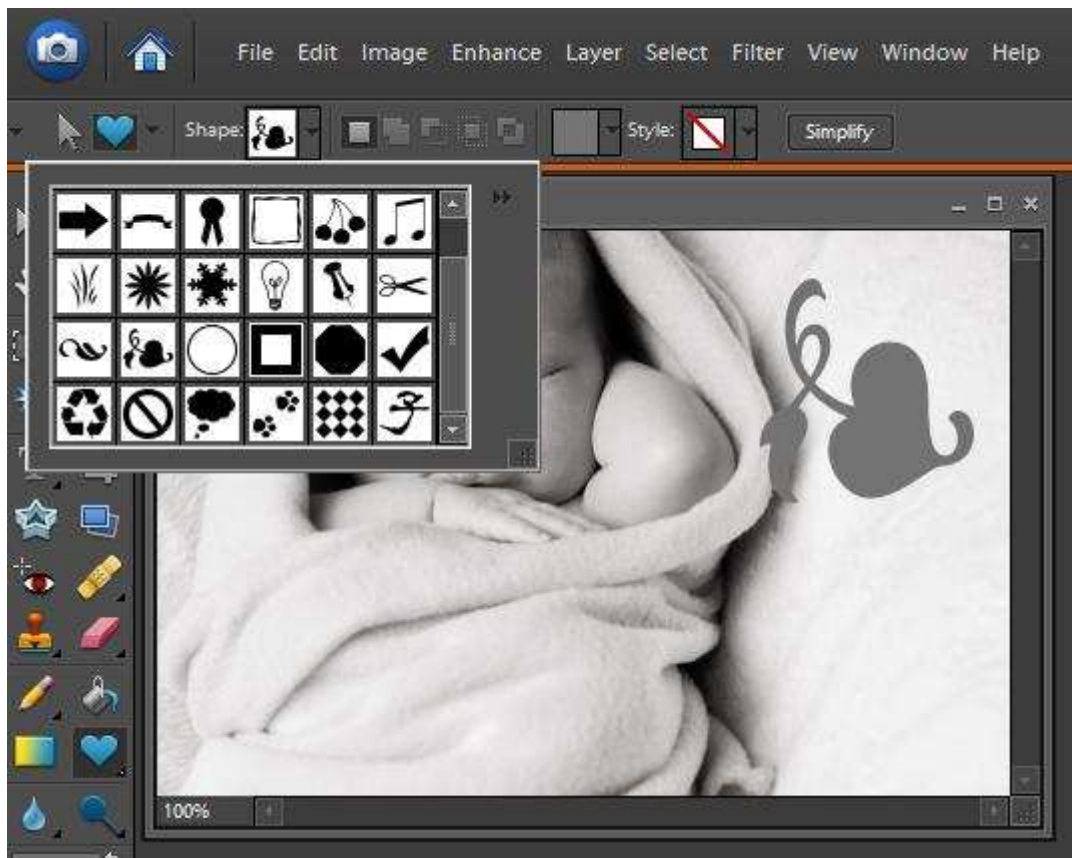
In the image below I have used “cooling filter 82”





Adding Shapes And Objects; Sometimes you will find that adding a simple shape to your image can create a great and more detailed image. To do this you'll need to use the custom shape tool from within the toolbox and it's shaped as a heart.

Next you'll see a shape menu above your image so click on that. This gives you different shapes to choose from so select your shape. Now left click your mouse and drag the shape to the size you want. You'll also notice more options above your image, like adding colour to your shape, style picker plus lots more. See image below.



Using Brushes; Using brushes in Elements is very simple, but it's not easy when it comes to painting with your mouse with them. Okay let's go ahead and choose a brush.

You'll see in your tool box on the right your brush tool and if you click on the little black arrow in the bottom corner a flyout box will appear, giving you four more options. See image below.



You'll also see in the top left hand corner your brush preview and if you click on that you'll get a selection of brushes to choose from. You'll see another little double arrow and if you click on that, you can change the way your brushes look...thumbnail, large thumbnail....etc.

Now if you click on the brush icon to the right you can access more additional settings for your brushes.

In here you'll see fade, hue jitter, scatter, spacing, hardness. You'll have to play around with these settings to find out what works best for you on your images or photos.

You'll see in the image below the new flyout box appears after I clicked on the brush icon above it.



Four great tips to think about when you're using the paint brushes.

- 1** – If you're painting on a photo, I would set your brush set to normal mode. You'll find it easy to paint the background.
- 2** – Using the impressionist brush will create a painted effect when you apply it to your image or photo. This is a really cool way of creating artistic affects.
- 3** – Colour replacement tool;- this for me has to be the best and most useful tool. If you set the mode to saturation and the foreground colour to black, you can selectively paint out the colour from the photo. If you need to switch colours, just switch the colour mode.
- 4** – If you need to blend, use the blending mode as this blends your brush strokes with the layer content.

Chapter 6 – Other Great Tools Within Elements

There are loads of other great tools within Elements, but below I am going to show you my personal favourite ones. Starting with; Creating slide shows, Emailing photos, Creating flip books, and Create a web gallery and Creations.



Creating Slide Shows; I think the create slide shows in Elements is so cool, in fact it's in my top five favourites. Elements allows you to turn your images or photos into a video presentation fully complete with music, effects and narration. In order to do this you need to select the create tab on the right hand side. Next you have to add your images or photos and you can either do this from the organizer first or select them from within your slide show editor.

If you have chosen an image or a photo you don't need, just right click and select delete. If you want to add video or media, just select add blank slide and add media button. Again this will all seem a bit strange at first, so you'll have to play around with it and try different settings.



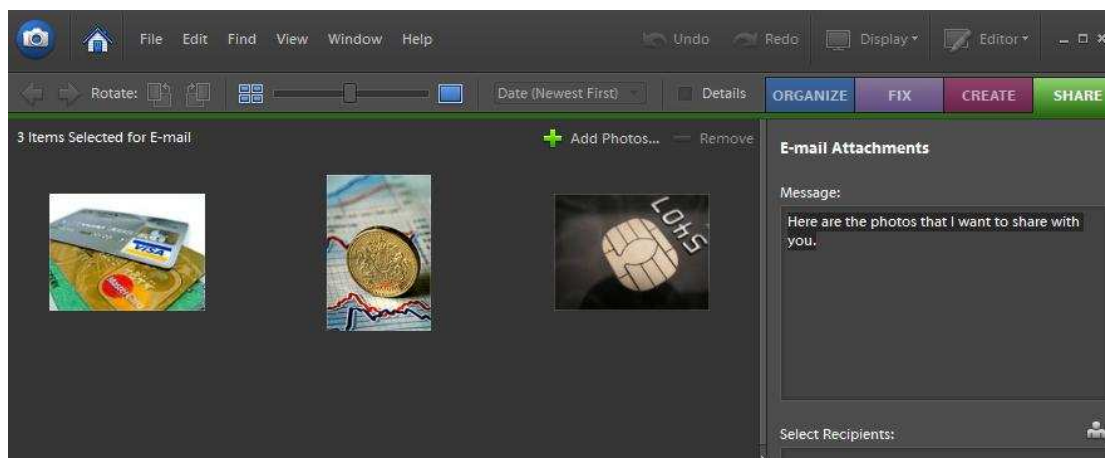


Emailing Your Images Or Photos; Another great extra tool within Elements is being able to email your images or photos. Elements also allows you to resize your photos before you send them.

To do this all you need to do is select the share tab on the right hand side. You can use this in full mode or edit mode. Next just click on the attach email option and then just drag and drop your images or photos into the blank box on the right.

Also in there you have the option to resize your images or photos and a quality option. Once you're happy just click the next button, then add your message in and click next. This then opens your default email and then just click send.

As you can see from the image below I have attached three images and added a message in the message box.



How To Create A Flipbook; Another great tool in Elements is the flipbook creation. There really isn't much to it, but the end results can be amazing.

All you have to do is select a group of images or photos in the organizer. You can change the order that the images will appear and then just select the flipbook option to combine all your images or photos into a running video.

Elements allows you to set a photo frames per second in flipbook. To access flipbook you need to click on the create tab and then you'll see two arrows with more options at the side of it. Click on that and then click on flipbook. If you need to slow the speed down, slide your bar-slider to the left and once you're happy just click output and save. See image below.



How To Create A Web Gallery; I would have to say that this function in Elements is better than Photoshop's. To get started all you need to do is open your organizer, select the create tab then click on the on-line gallery button. Next drag and drop your images or photos to the panel on the right. Then click the next button at the bottom. Choose a template or a category and click the next button again at the bottom.

You'll have to wait a few seconds here while Elements builds up your gallery. Once it's finished you'll see what it will look like in the image on the left. If you're happy then click on next and next again. You are then given the option to save these to FTP or CD/DVD. See image below.





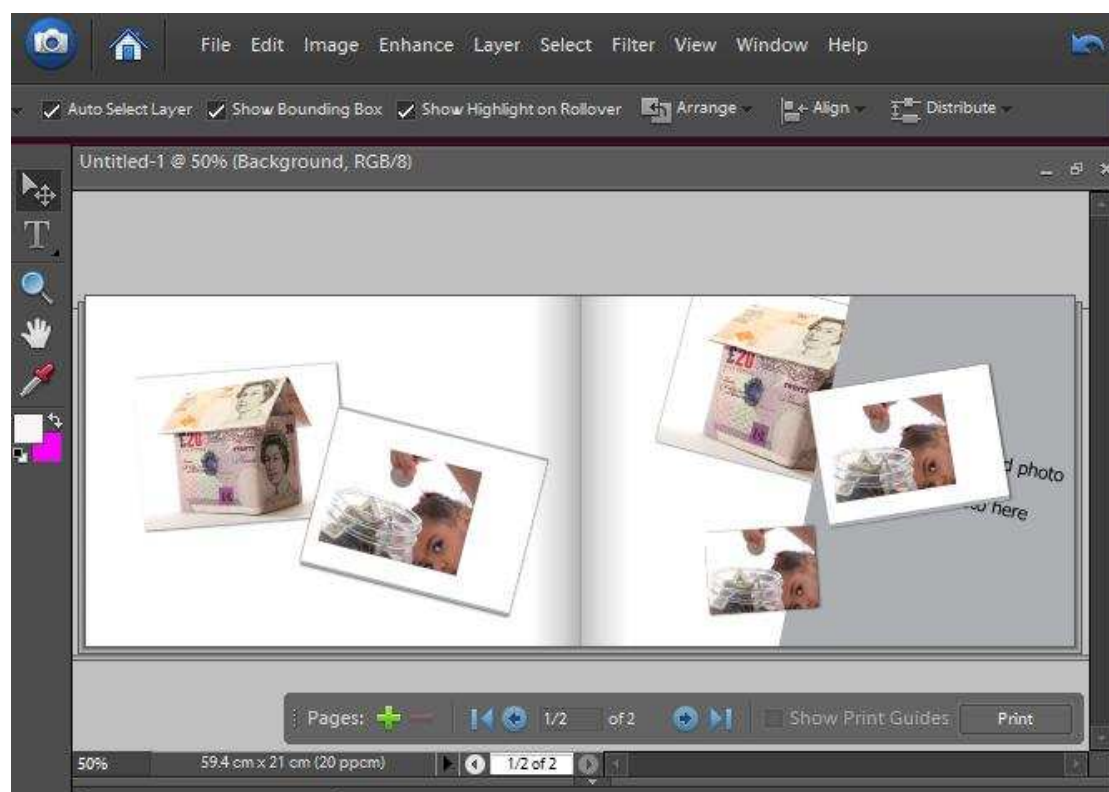
Producing Creations; Producing creations in Elements is just a case of dragging and dropping. First you need to select your images or photos and next click the create tab in your organizer.

Next you have to click on photo book option. You'll notice to the right you are given some choices; Random photo layout, Choose photo layout, themes and if you scroll down a little you'll see additional options.

If you're happy with the photos you have selected click the done button and I always make sure the box is ticked for "auto-fill with project bin photos".

Elements then generates your photo book for you. It gives you two pages when it's finished. The second page, Elements has automatically selected a random layout for you.

All you need to do now is drag and drop your images or photos into the spaces provided. You'll notice you have little boxes around your images, you can alter the size and shape by just clicking on them. See image below.



I hope you enjoyed this "Introduction Guide To Adobe Elements".

Regards
David Peters