



Photoshop Elements

Week 1 - Photoshop Elements

Work Environment and Finesse with the Brush

Welcome to Photoshop Elements' Work Environment and Tools. Enjoy a friendly tour through Photoshop's work area including the Menu Bar, Options Bar, Toolbox, Active Image Area, and Palettes. Open your digital toolbox and explore the power tools at your disposal. Study shortcuts, saving, and navigation in Photoshop to make your time on the computer inspired not confusing. The Photoshop Work Environment has these components:

- **Menu Bar** contains menus organized by tasks.
- **Toolbox** contains tools for creating and editing images.
- **Options Bar** provides options for using a tool.
- **Active Image Area** displays the active open file. The window containing an open file is also called the document window. You can have several files open, but only one is active at a time.
- **Palette Well** helps you organize the palettes in your work area.
- **Palettes** help you monitor and modify images. You can access the Palettes under Window in the Menu Bar.

■ Menu Bar

Just like any computer program, you have several dropdown menus to work with. Explore them all! But, most importantly remember to SAVE!

■ Photoshop Elements Toolbox (with keyboard shortcut)

Navigation and measuring tools

- Move (V)
- Zoom (Z)
- Hand (H)
- Eyedropper (I)

Selection tools

- Rectangular Marquee (M)
- Elliptical Marquee (M)
- Lasso (L)
- Magnetic Lasso (L)
- Polygonal Lasso (L)
- Magic Wand (W)
- Quick Selection (A)
- Selection Brush (A)

Type tools

- Horizontal Type (T)
- Vertical Type (T)
- Horizontal Type Mask (T)
- Vertical Type Mask (T)

Painting and drawing tools

- Brush (B)
- Pencil (N)
- Impressionist Brush (B)
- Color Replacement (B)
- Paint Bucket (K)
- Gradient (G)

Crop tools

- Crop (C)
- Cookie Cutter (Q)
- Straighten (P)

Retouching tools

- Red Eye Removal (Y)
- Spot Healing Brush (J)
- Healing Brush (J)
- Clone Stamp (S)
- Pattern Stamp (S)
- Eraser (E)
- Background Eraser (E)
- Magic Eraser (E)
- Blur (R)
- Sharpen (R)
- Smudge (R)
- Sponge (O)
- Dodge (O)
- Burn (O)

Shape tools

- Rectangle (U)
- Rounded Rectangle (U)
- Ellipse (U)
- Polygon (U)
- Line (U)
- Custom Shape (U)
- Shape Selection (U)

■ **Active Image Area** and Viewing and Navigation

Showing your Rulers is very helpful. Go to View > Rulers. You can change your measurement units under Preferences.

Image size can be changed by cropping, resizing the dimensions of an image, or altering the resolution.

The canvas size can be changed without changing the size of the image on it. It can be come smaller, larger, or rotate.

Changing your View, zooming in (+) or out (-), does not alter your actual image size. Your view of the image is either closer, farther, fit on screen (0), print size, or actual pixels. Use your shortcuts.

■ **Palettes** - You will most likely use these Palettes: Layers, Color, Navigation, and Character.

■ **Layers** are useful because they let you add components to the image and work on them one at a time, without permanently changing your original image. For each layer, you can adjust color and brightness, apply special effects, reposition layer content, specify opacity and blending values, and so on. You can also rearrange the stacking order and link layers to work on them simultaneously. The bottommost layer is at the bottom of the Layers Palette and is usually locked until you convert it to a regular layer.

Layers are like stacked, transparent sheets of glass on which you can paint or have images on. You can see through the transparent areas of a layer to the layers below. You can work on each layer independently if selecting the layer highlights it.

Important! Look for the visual clue that you have a layer selected before attempting an edit. Each layer remains independent until you combine or merge the layers.

■ **Color Palette** shows what color you are working with either in the foreground or background. You can select a color several ways, but you need to be sure the color section box is outlined in black to show it is active. Just click on which box you want then do one of the following:

- Drag the color sliders. By default, the slider colors change as you drag. Depending on what Mode you are working, your slider will be different.
- Enter number values next to the color sliders.
- Click on the color box and the Color Picker will come up. Choose a color and click OK.

■ **Navigation Palette** – you have to see it to believe it.

■ **Character Palette** provides options for formatting characters / fonts. Some formatting options are also available in the options bar.



■ **Class Exercise - Make a pizza and visit the salad bar.**

Required files: pizza_pie.psd / plate.psd / salad_bar.psd / place_setting.psd

This is an exercise to practice working with Layers Window within the Photoshop files, making Layers visible and invisible, changing the stacked order of layers, copying and pasting on a new layer, using the Move Tool to move one layer to another file, using the Move Tool to rearrange objects on a layer, making a new layer, copying a layer, and merging layers.

Open pizza_pie.psd in the Full Edit Mode.

Open your Layers Palette>Window>Layers.

Choose your pizza toppings by making the layer visible or invisible by poking the eye.

Change the order that the layers are stacked by clicking and dragging the layers up and down in the layer palette.

Under the Layer Palette Menu (little double arrows at the top) > Merge Visible.

Using the Lasso Tool select a slice of pizza and Edit > Copy.

Open plate.psd and Edit > Paste – your slice will appear as a new layer.

Open salad_bar.psd and make both the plate and this file seen in your workspace.

Click and drag items from the salad bar from the layer palette on to your plate.

Fill up your plate and rearrange the order of the layers. On the plate file, under the Layer Palette Menu > Merge Visible.

Open place_setting.psd and drag the plate to that file. Rearrange the layer order and the location of the items of the layers to make a nice setting. Be sure the martini is on the coaster. Merge visible when done.

Enjoy! Practice working with layers for your homework!

Finesse with the Brush

We will do a series of exercises to practice using the mouse with the brush tool. Proficiency takes time, but worth the effort.

Remember you can change your brush cursor under Preferences > Display & Cursors I like to use Normal Brush Tip so that I can see the size of my brush as I paint.

Depending on the need you can pick the Brush or Pencil tool. The Brush tool makes a softer stroke. The Pencil tool makes hard-edged lines. Both use your foreground color as you draw or paint.

Option Bar

You change your brush size and behavior in the Option Bar.

You can choose your blending mode from the Mode menu in the Option Bar. A brush's blending mode determines how its pixels blend with underlying pixels in the image. Just like the Layer's blending mode. You can find descriptions of the blending modes in your Help Menu.

Set your opacity – This might be fun with watercolor effects.

Straight Lines

To draw a straight line:

1. Click a starting point in the image.
2. Let go of the left button and move your cursor to your intended endpoint.
3. Hold down Shift Key, and click an ending point. You are not clicking and dragging to make this line.

Custom Brushes

You can make your own set of custom brushes from any image you want. Using a black image makes a sharp brush, but to get soft edges have some grays in there.

1. Select a part of an image to use as a custom brush.
2. Choose Edit > Define Brush Preset.
3. Name the brush, and click OK.

This brush should appear on the bottom of your brush size palette.

Art History Brush (it is the brush with the spiral)

Art History Brush tool paints with stylized strokes, using the source data from a specified history state or snapshot. If you are going to try this out, make a copy of the layer that you wish to paint so you can go back to the original if needed.

Experimenting with different paint style, size, and tolerance options in the option bar to create different artistic styles.



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