



Photoshop Elements

Week 3 – 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.