PHOTOSHOP BASICS: VINTAGE PHOTO FIXES

Course Topics:

- Photo Adjustments

- Photo Editing Tools

- Layers

What is Photoshop Elements?

Photoshop Elements is a streamlined version of Adobe Photoshop CC. Despite missing some more advanced features, it is a robust piece of software capable of handling many types of projects. You can buy Photoshop Elements as a one-time purchase instead of a monthly subscription like the full version.

Importing into Photoshop

The simplest way to bring images into Photoshop is to drag and drop your photo on top of the Photoshop icon.

Another way to open a file you would like to edit is to move to the "**File**" tab, click "**Open**," and locate the file on the desktop.

To start today's lesson, open Photoshop Elements and drag the file named "**Image 1**" (or another file) onto the Photoshop icon.

Once Elements is opened, click on the "**Expert**" button. Elements offers a variety of modes for different uses, but the "Expert" setting has the most tools available for photo editing.
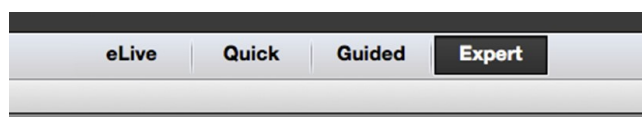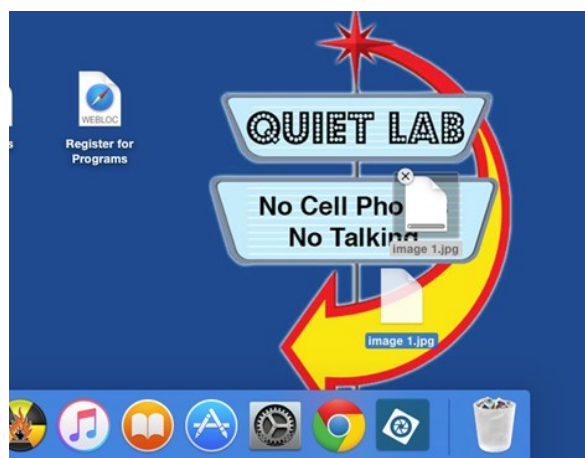
Adjusting Levels

The simplest change you can make to a photo is adjusting its levels. When a photo is taken, it often ends up looking a little "flat." In "Image 1," you can tell that the black and white tones in the photo are slightly grey. To fix this, click on the "**Enhance**" tab, select "**Adjust Lighting**" and then select "**Levels**" to open the "Levels" window.

**Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Levels**

In the "Levels" window, there is a "wave" image with three tiny arrows underneath. The left arrow is for adjusting black tones, the middle arrow is for mid-tones, and the right arrow is for white tones. Drag the left and right arrows inward to the edge of each side of the wave and watch what happens to the photo.
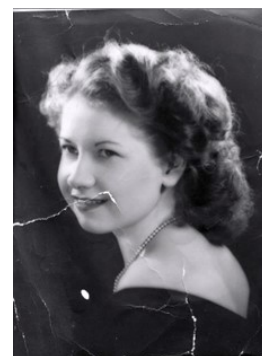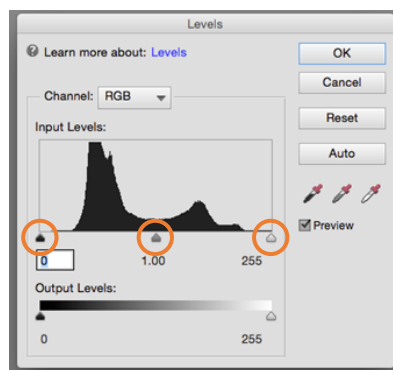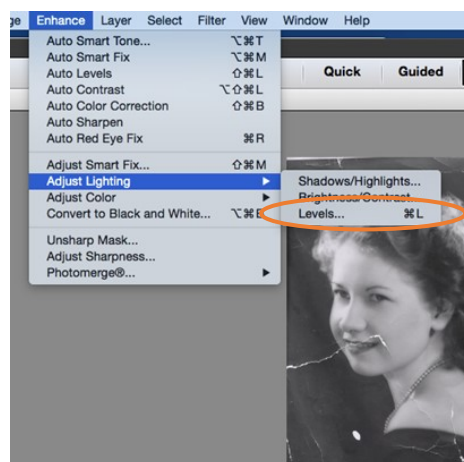
ADJUSTMENTS

Adjusting Saturation

Saturation effects how much color is shown in a photo and adjusting it can improve its appearance. Although the "Image 1" photo appears to be black and white, it is actually made up of a lot of subtle colors. To adjust saturation, click the "**Enhance**" tab, select "**Adjust Color**" and then select "**Adjust Hue/Saturation**" to open the slider. De-saturate the photo by moving the slider to the left *almost* all the way (adjusting all the way may makes the photo look a little lifeless).
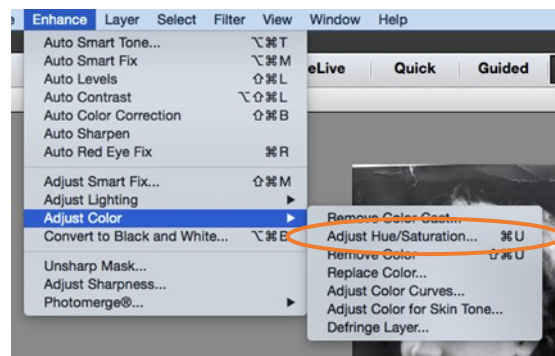
Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation

Crop Tool

The **Crop Tool** is in the "**Modify**" tools menu on the left side of the workspace. You can use it to remove unwanted portions of a photo as well as center the image and improve the focal point. The crop function is like taking scissors to the image and cutting away the edges. When you click on the Crop tool, a grid appears over the image and you use it to preview what will be left after the crop. When you are satisfied with the crop, click "**Enter**", or select the green arrow under the image. (Note: The grid lines and where they intersect indicate the focal points of the photo.)
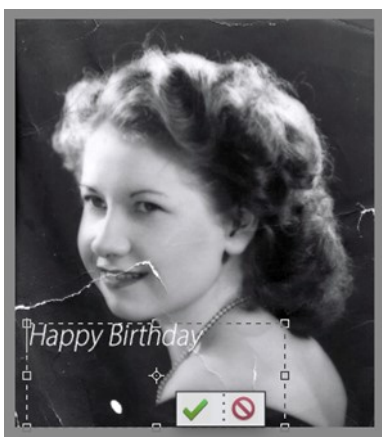
Text Tool

You can add text to an image by clicking the "**T**" tool in the "**Draw**" tools menu and drawing a text box on top of the photo. If you're unfamiliar, text boxes are spaces where you can add text. You can then adjust the font, font size, style, and orientation in the tools options bar located below the workspace.
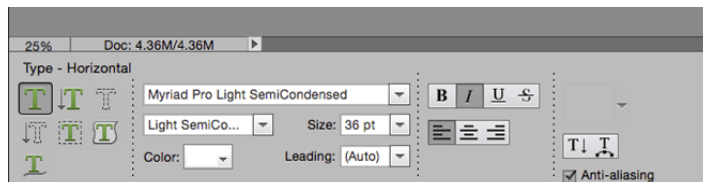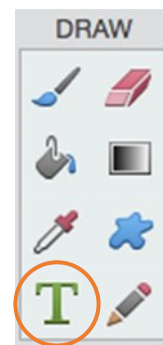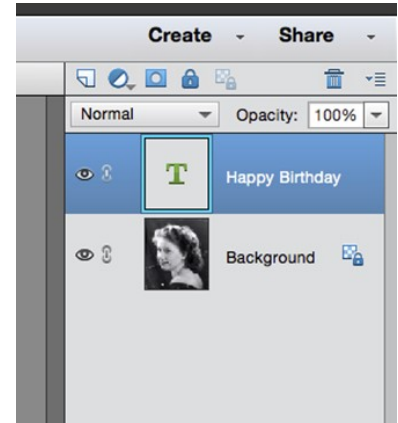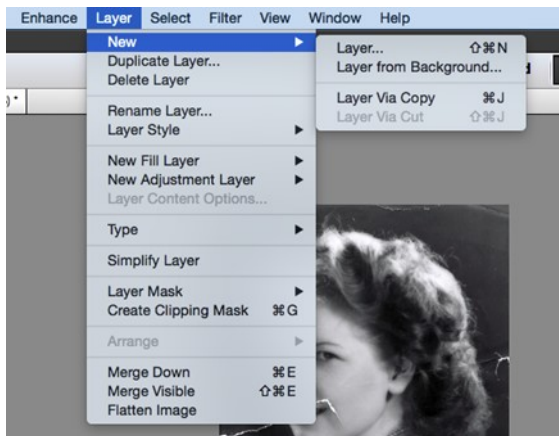
Layers

Layers are like transparent sheets stacked on top of each other. The highest layers are the most visible while the lowest layers may be invisible or slightly covered.

When you add a text box, a new layer appears in the **Layers window** on the right side of the workspace. (If the Layers window is not visible, click on the Layers icon below the workspace, on the right.) The name of the layer comes from the text box content.

When you open a photo, it is placed on a layer named, "**Background**." Although adding text automatically adds a new layer above the background layer, other changes you make will not automatically do this. In order to keep your original photo intact when making changes, you can add layers and work on them instead. Using layers allows you to experiment, erase, and undo mistakes a lot easier. However, there are some tools that can be used only on the background layer, such as the Dust and Scratches Filter and the Content-Aware Fill command to remove an unwanted object.

To create a new layer, select:

Layer > New > Layer

Once you create a new layer you will be asked to create a name for the layer
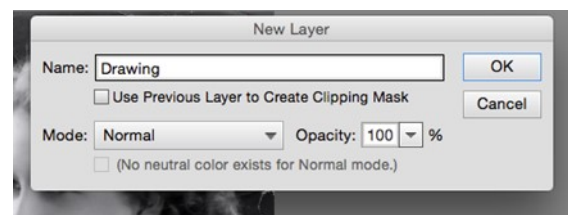
Try It!

Create a new layer and name it "Drawing."

Pencil and Brush Tools

Now that you have a "Drawing" layer, you can draw on your photo without altering the original. Click on the drawing layer if it is not already selected. Then, choose the paintbrush tool on the left side of the workspace in the "**Draw**" tools menu. Select a color by clicking on the white box in the corner and choose a color on the Color Picker.
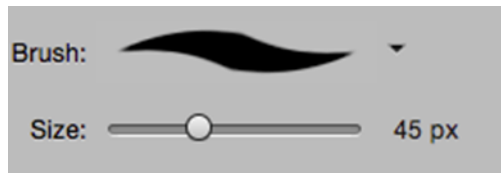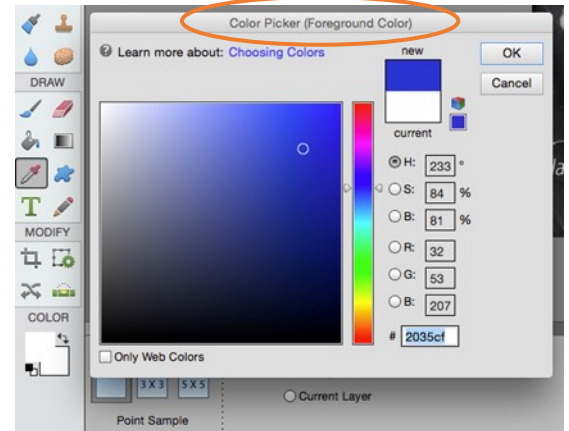
You can increase the brush size on the bottom tools options bar by moving the slider to the right.

Try It!

Paint some eyeglasses on your photo. Be sure the Drawing layer is selected. Try some of the special effects brushes, too! (Click on the "**Brush**" menu located above the size slider.)
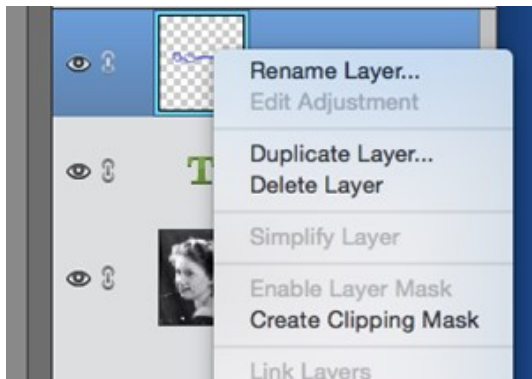
Deleting a Layer

If you don't like the changes you made, you can delete the layer by right clicking on it and selecting "**Delete Layer**" – It's as simple as that!
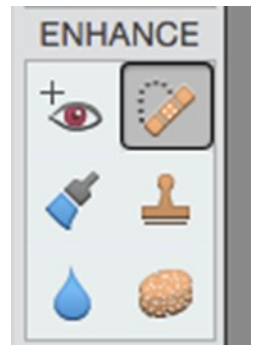
BRUSHES

Healing Brush

One of the most exciting tools in Photoshop is the magic "**Healing Brush**" (looks like a bandage on the "**Enhance**" tool menu). You can use it to erase blemishes and clean up damaged areas on a photo. The Healing Brush uses a software algorithm and takes input from the area around the brush to fill in the spaces you are correcting.

The Healing Brush works quite well on single-shade items, but it may not work as well on detailed areas. Decreasing the brush size in these types of areas may work better.

Using the Healing and Clone Brushes

- Choose the bandage icon for the Spot Healing Brush or the Healing Brush tool.
- You can use the healing brushes directly on the photo layer (Background), or you can create a new layer above your photo to keep the original intact.
- Spot Healing is good for tiny places like spots or blemishes.
    - ◊ Make the brush just slightly bigger than the spot or blemish.
    - ◊ Proximity Match – searches surrounding area for replacement pixels.
    - ◊ Create Texture – blend based only on the area you click or drag over.
    - ◊ Content Aware – uses input from surrounding area to blend with photo
- Healing Brush using **Alt or Opt** keys (matches texture, lighting, transparency and shading and blends it)
- Clone Stamp using **Alt or Opt** keys (Doesn't blend like the healing brushes; only covers an area, like a patch.)
- Bonus Tool: Dust and Scratches (under **Filter>Noise**) used on Background layer

Try It!

Using Image 2:

1. Bring the image into Photoshop.
2. Adjust the levels.
3. Adjust Saturation.
4. Crop the Photo.
5. Use the Healing brush and other tools to remove damaged areas.

Tips:

- Double Click Hand tool to fit image on work area.

Image Size

- 72 pixels per inch recommended for websites/presentations
- 300 pixels per inch recommended for print