

# Adobe Elements Tricks and Tips



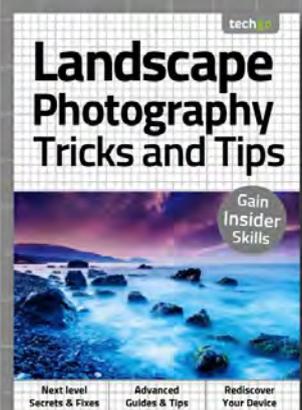
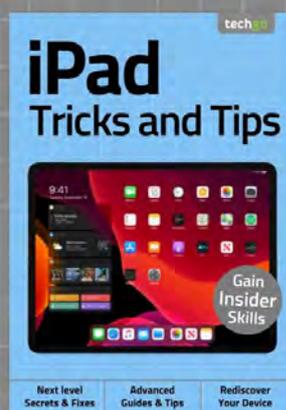
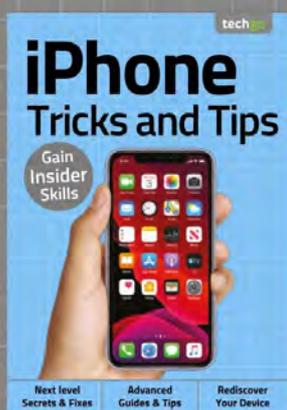
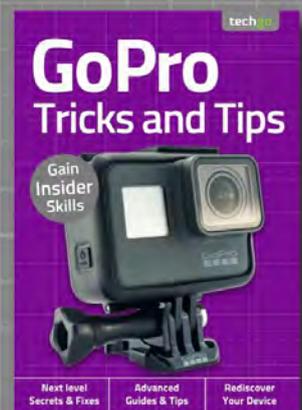
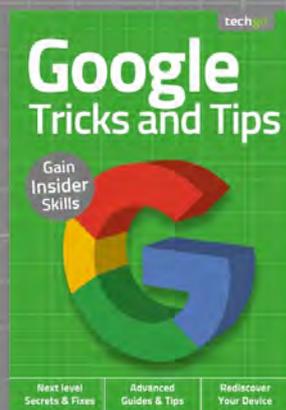
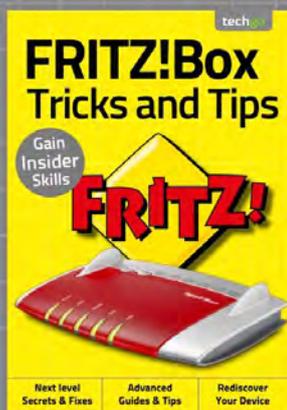
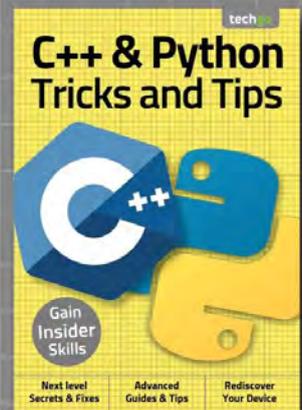
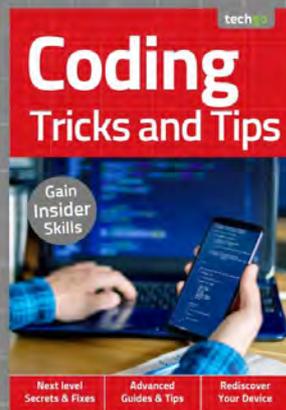
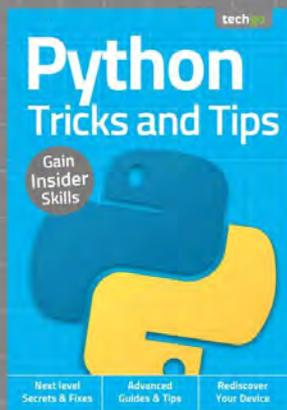
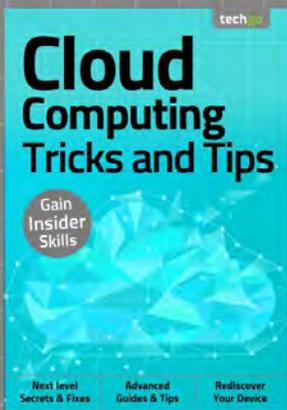
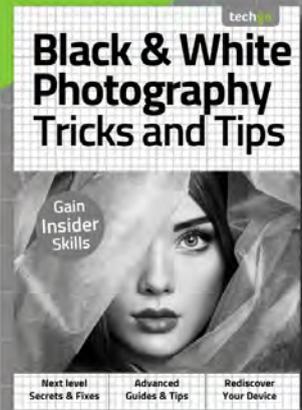
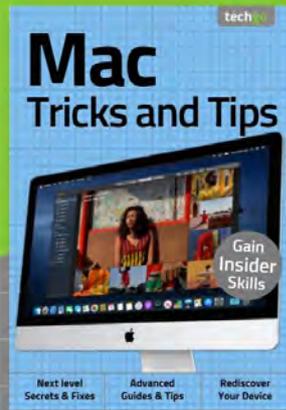
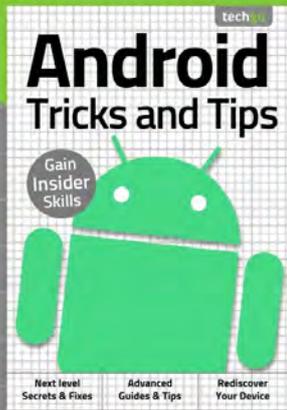
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# Adobe Elements Tricks and Tips

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Advancing your skill set is the goal of all users of consumer technology and our team of long term industry experts will help you achieve exactly that. Over this extensive series of titles we will be looking in greater depth at how you make the absolute most from the latest consumer electronics, software, hobbies and trends! We will guide you step-by-step through using all the advanced aspects of the technology that you may have been previously apprehensive at attempting. Let our expert guide help you build your understanding of technology and gain the skills to take you from a confident user to an experienced expert.

Over the page our journey continues, and we will be with you at every stage to advise, inform and ultimately inspire you to go further.

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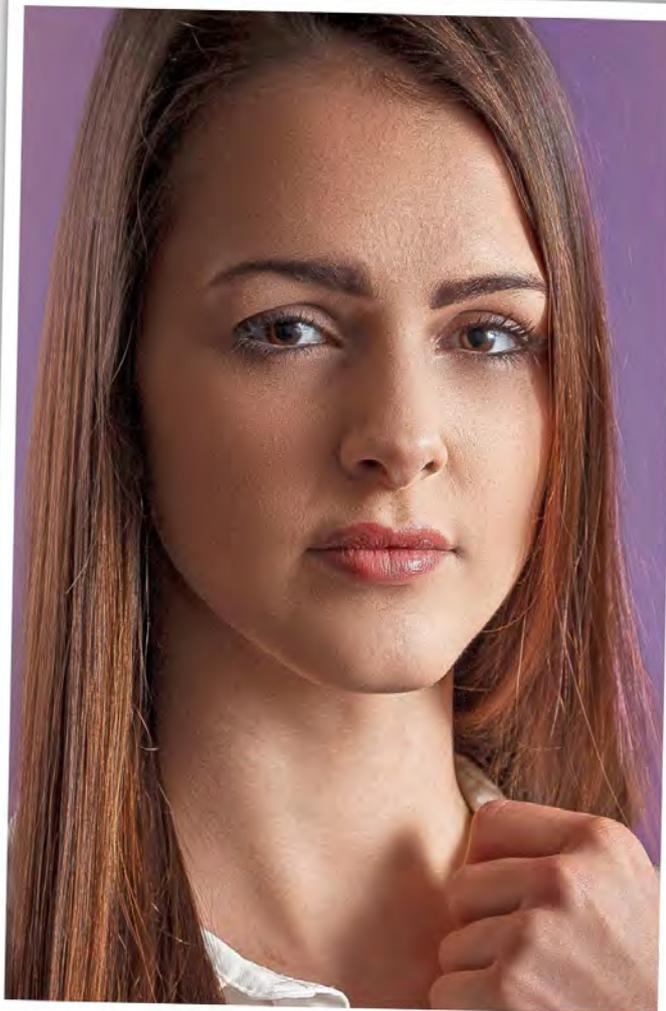
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# Your Guide to Image Editing

The great thing about Adobe Photoshop Elements is that it can cater for all skill levels when it comes to image editing, digital manipulation and creating new works of art. Whether you are a complete novice who is starting out and wanting to learn the ropes or an experienced digital artist who needs more advanced tools to complete their project, Photoshop Elements has all the power and sophistication you need to get the most out of your photos.



# A Guide to Using Layers

Layers are one of the fundamental aspects you can employ when it comes to non-destructive image editing.

**T**he use of layers has become the very core of image editing since its introduction in the early '90s. As you might imagine, layers are exactly what they sound like. You can have a number of separate elements, each on its own layer, that are stacked one on top of the other. When all viewed together, they create the final image.

The advantage of using layers is clear. It means you can change an element on one layer only and not have an impact on the rest of the image. It also means that you can take an image and duplicate it on another layer and perform any edits you want on that one in the knowledge that the base image

will remain untouched in case it doesn't turn out quite as you had hoped. Within Elements, there are four main types of layer. There is the basic pixel layer which contains the main photo elements of the project. There are text layers where you can type text and change the size and colour. Then there are fill/adjustment layers that are designed to affect the layer below it such as changing the saturation or brightness of the layer below, or just adding a colour to that layer. Finally there are vector layers that contain scalable graphical elements such as shapes and work paths. Each layer type can also have a mask added to it so only part of that layer can be seen.

## 1 Create New Layer

You can click the Create New Layer button at the top of the layer panel, use the key board shortcut or go to the file menu and choose Layer > New > Layer to add a new layer to the stack. You will be prompted to name the new layer. You can rename it at any time.

## 2 Create New Group

Sometimes it may be necessary to take a number of layers and group them to make things more manageable, as the number of layers increases in your document. You can highlight each layer





you want and then press the Create New Group button to group them. Alternatively, you can go to the file menu and select Layer > New > Group

### 3 Fill or Adjustment Layer

Fills and Adjustments allows you to add colours, gradients and patterns to a layer. They also allow you to add adjustments such as Brightness and Contrast, Hue and Saturation and Levels. Adjustment layers affect the layers directly beneath them in the stack or they can be clipped to the one layer directly below them only.

### 4 Add Layer Mask

Each layer you use in a document can have a layer mask added to it. The mask is designed to let you hide or reveal

specific parts of that layer only. Areas of the mask in white let the layer remain visible, while any areas of the mask in black hide that part of the layer. The rule of thumb is: white reveals pixels and black conceals them.

### 5 Lock all Pixels

Clicking this button locks the layer completely and no further edits can be made to it. You will also be unable to reposition the image on a locked layer.

### 6 Lock Transparent Pixels

If you click this button, any area of a layer that has no image pixels in it is considered transparent. An area that is transparent is then locked and no edits can be made so it remains transparent.

### 7 Delete Layer

The trashcan shaped button lets you delete any selected layers if you wish to remove them from the layer stack.

### 8 Panel Options

There are a number of menu options available here such as Rename Layer, Duplicate Layer, Delete Layer, Link Layers, Merge Visible and Merge Down.

### 9 Blend Modes

Blend Modes determine how the image colours on the layer interact with the layer below it. It can be changed for every layer individually or as part of a group for certain visual effects.

### 10 Visibility

The small eye icon on the left of each layer lets you turn that layer off so it is not visible. Any effects associated with that layer are also rendered invisible until the eye icon is clicked once more.

### 11 Link/Unlink Layers

This lets you link a number of layers so that any transformations and move commands you make are all applied to the linked layers at the same time.

### 12 Background

The Background layer is the default bottom layer. Whether it is an image you have opened or a new document, the Background layer is always partially locked until you choose to unlock it.

### 13 Standard Layer

A typical layer with pixel information displayed on it.

### 14 Adjustment Layer

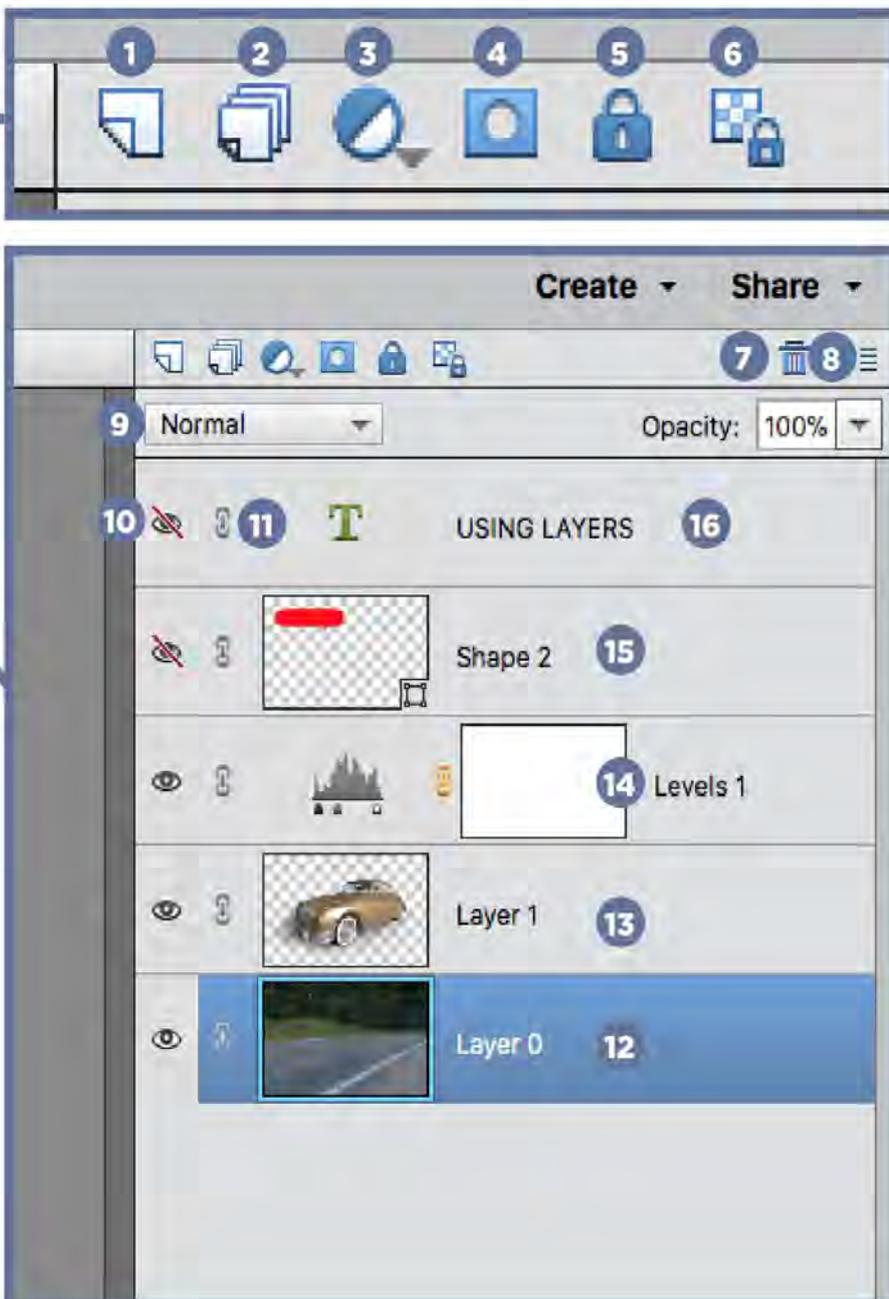
An adjustment layer is designed to affect the layer below it. In this example, we have a Levels adjustment that alters the brightness and contrast of all the layers stacked below it.

### 15 Vector Layer

A vector layer contains scalable data such as shapes in the case of our example. A small icon in the lower right corner of the thumbnail indicates it is a scalable graphic.

### 16 Text Layer

The thumbnail of a Text layer displays a T to indicate the layer contains scalable text. The layer name also reflects whatever text is on that layer.





# Methods for Adjusting an Image

When it comes to methods for adjusting your images in Elements, you are spoilt for choice. There are a number of methods to get an image looking great. We'll show you how each one works, with some examples, to help you choose which method suits you best.

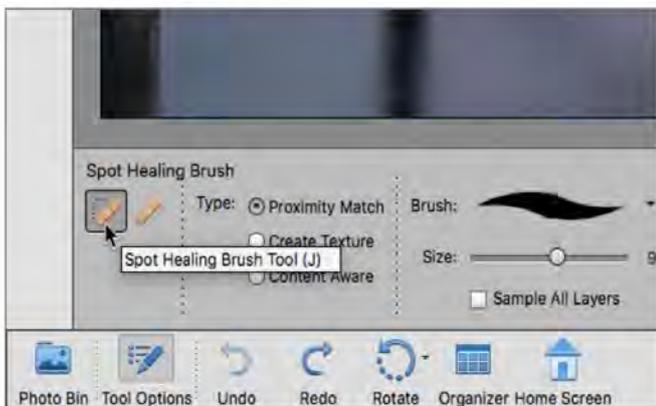
## Quick Mode



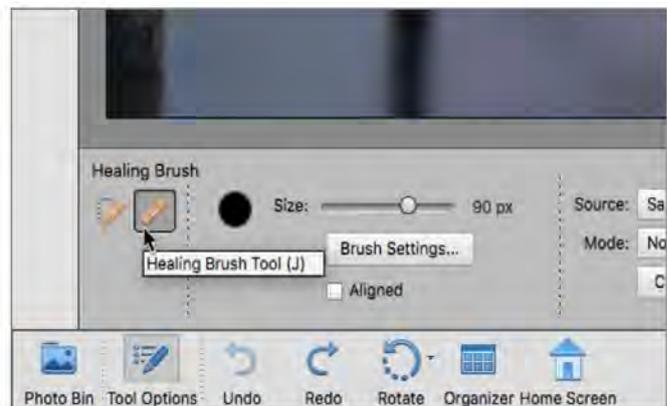
**1** We start in the Quick mode workspace with a sunrise image of a pier that is in need of some work to make it look its best. The first thing to do is remove that large black spot in the top right corner; probably a bit of mud stuck to the lens, currently spoiling the shot.



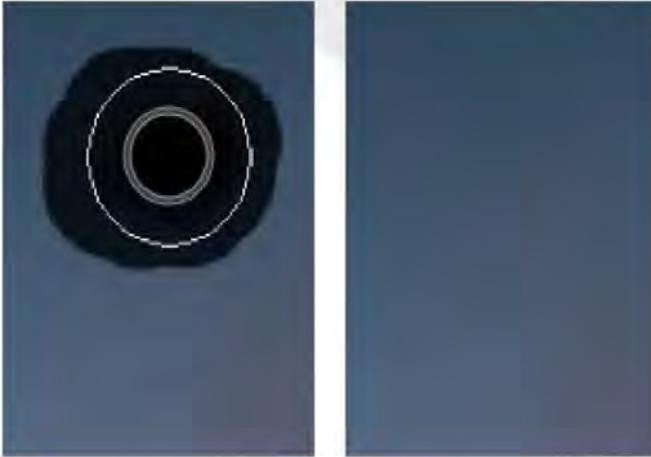
**2** To remove such a blemish, you can go to the toolbar and choose the Spot Healing Brush Tool (J). When you choose this tool, the Tool Option panel displays Spot Healing Brush options. You can choose Spot Healing Brush or Healing Brush to remove the spot.



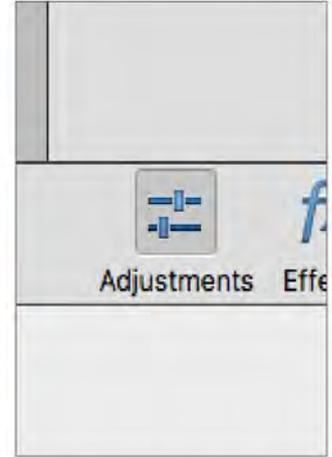
**3** The main difference between the two brushes is that the Spot Healing Brush lets you paint directly over the blemish and then works out what to fill it with by analysing the area around it. Proximity Match and Content Aware are the best options here for this kind of blemish.



**4** The Healing Brush Tool asks you to select an area to be the clone source by clicking on a clean part of the image next to the blemish. This chosen area will then be cloned over the blemish when you paint over it. The cloned source will be blended in to be as seamless as possible.



**5** You can alter the brush size by using the Size slider in the Tool Options panel or by pressing the left and right bracket keys. Pressing [ will reduce the size of the brush and pressing ] will increase the brush size. This lets you clone with greater accuracy and detail if you need it.



**6** Now that the blemish is gone, we can look at making the image more vibrant and appealing. Layers are not available in Quick mode, so it comes down to choosing the right method for the best overall effect. The easiest way to see the effect you can have on the image is to choose Adjustments from the taskbar.



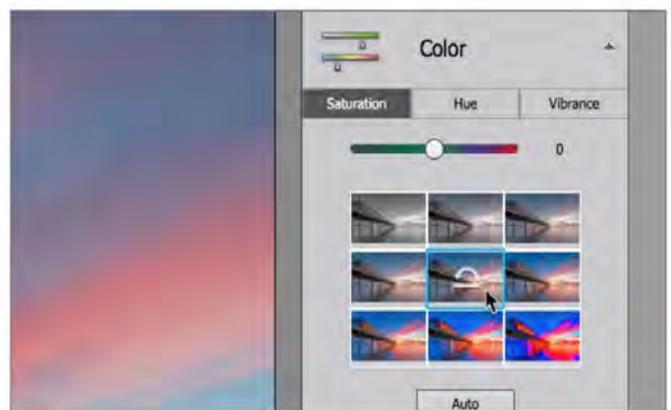
**7** This calls up the Adjustments panel. You can choose Smart Fix and select from a number of options that make subtle changes to the image and recover detail in the highlights and shadows. Hover over each one to see a preview of the effect applied to your photo. Click the one you want to apply.



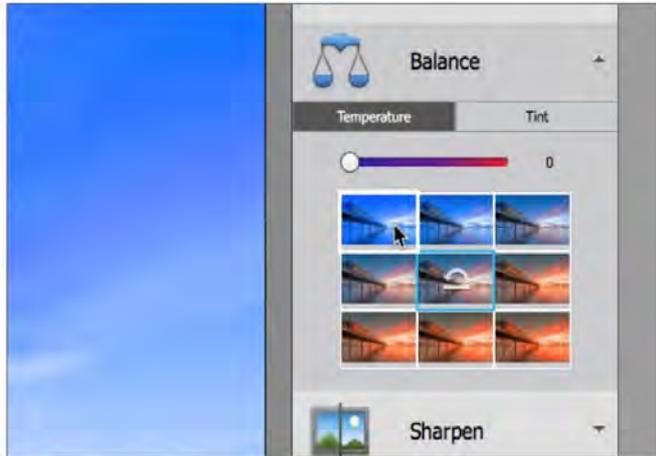
**8** Next, you can go to the Exposure adjustment and choose to make the image brighter or darker. Again you can hover over a number of options and see a preview of the effect or use the slider to make more subtle adjustments to the brightness of the image.



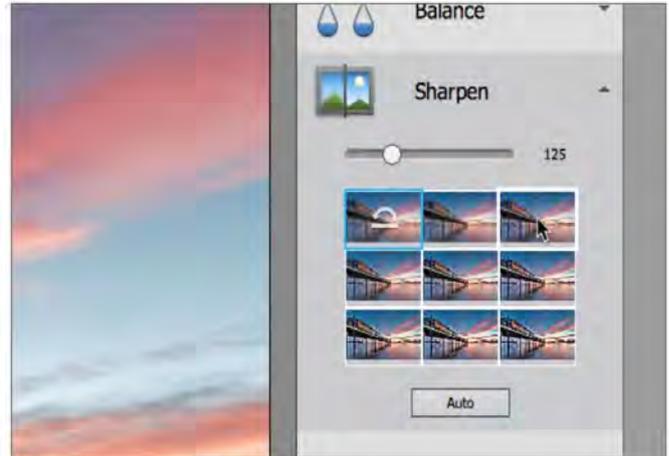
**9** The Lighting panel is the key to really controlling the brightness of your Highlights, Midtones and Shadows, each of which has its own tab for you to access. Choose from the options provided or use the sliders for more subtle control of each of the tonal options.



**10** The vividness of your image can be controlled in the Colour panel. Increase the Saturation globally or use Vibrance to increase the most subdued colours first. Hue lets you shift the entire colour palette for a surreal colour effect if you require it.

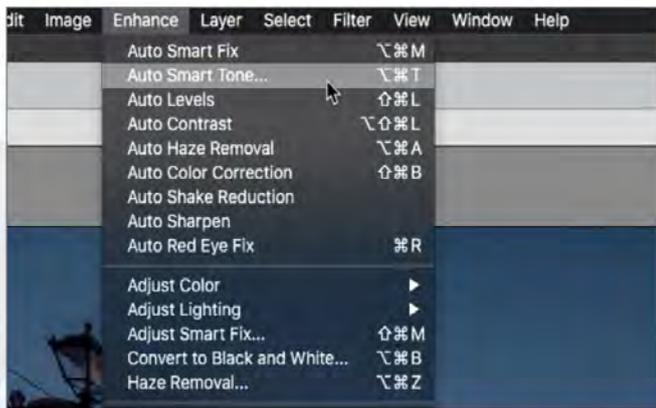


**11** Balance lets you shift the colour temperature from cold to warm and Tint allows you to add either an increasingly green colour cast or a magenta cast to help offset any colour inconsistency in your original image.



**12** Finally, you can go to the Sharpen panel and apply levels of sharpness to your image; but beware of overdoing it and creating artefacts and halos as the contrast increases and bright unwanted highlights appear around areas of high contrast in your photo. If you are happy, you can save the result.

### Quick Mode Auto Modes



**13** Under the Enhance menu are a number of Auto features to improve your image. These are quite broad in their effect and do lack a certain finesse, so you have no real control over the outcome. If you want some more input in the effect there are a couple with a bit more control worth looking at.



**14** If you go to Enhance > Auto Smart Tone (Shift + Cmd + T) an interactive panel appears, where you can drag a cursor around a grid. Each corner of the grid shows a possible outcome that can be achieved by moving the cursor further in that direction. Move it around until you get the result you want.



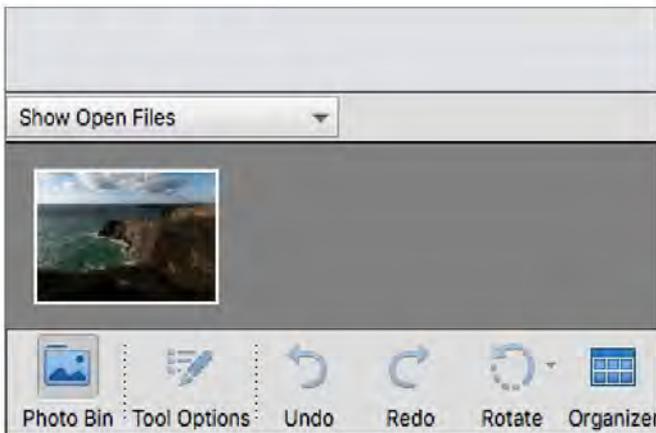
**15** If you go to Enhance > Adjust Colour > Adjust Colour Curves, you can adjust the Highlights, Midtones and Shadows of your image. There are a number of preset styles you can choose from to enhance the colour in your image as well as the option to manually adjust the tone sliders.



**16** Another option, but one that needs a light touch, is the Haze Removal tool. Go to Enhance > Haze Removal (Shift + Cmd + Z). This can be quite a strong effect but there are sliders to adjust the strength of the Haze reduction applied and also the sensitivity of the haze detection.



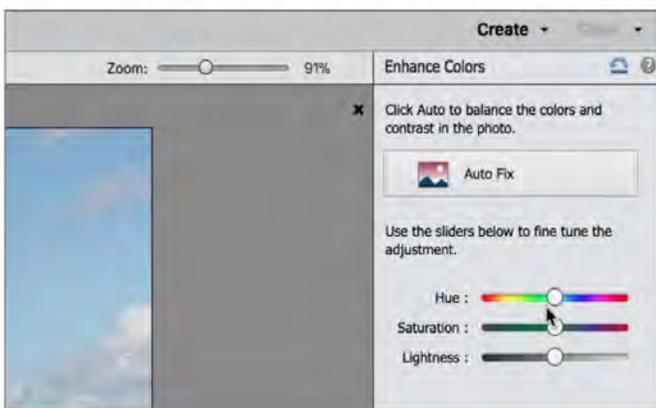
## Guided Mode



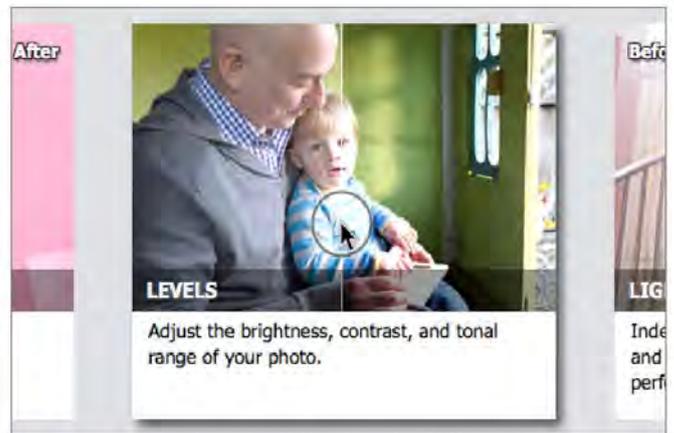
**1** Guided Mode is an alternative if you are happy to have less advanced adjustment options available but with more step-by-step guidance to help you on your way to creating the final image. Make sure you have an image open in the Photo Bin ready to work on.



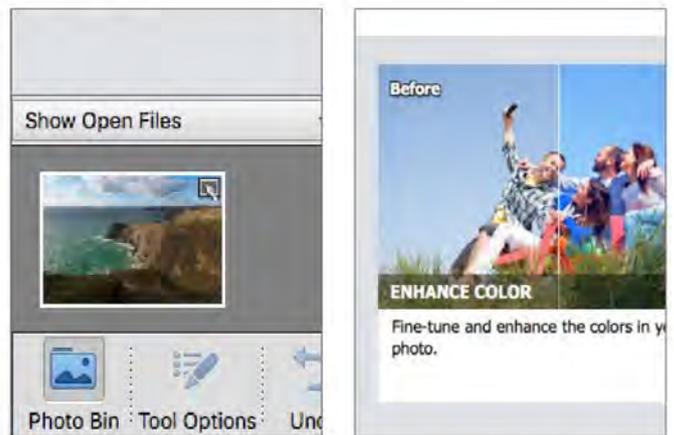
**3** You will be asked to create a Levels adjustment and a dialog panel will appear. Click OK. Since the image has a lot of underexposed dark areas in the foreground, sliding the Midtone slider to the left will brighten the photo in those darker areas. You can then click Next and then Done for this part.



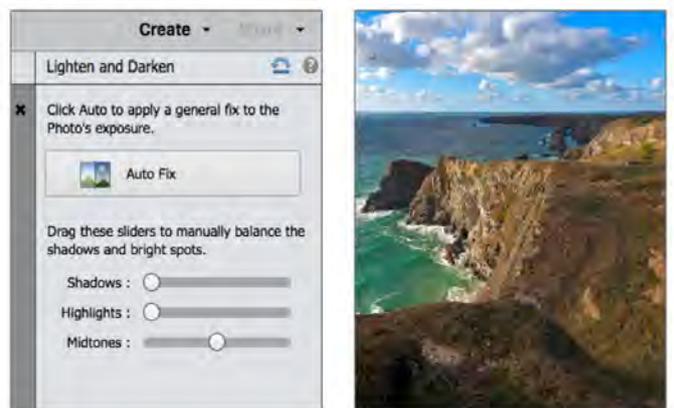
**5** You can use the three sliders of Hue, Saturation and Lightness to make the image much more saturated and bring out the colours in the sea, sky and foreground. A boost of Saturation to 45 and Lightness to -2 is enough to bring more life into the photo. You can click Next and Done once more.



**2** The great thing with Guided edits is that you don't have to apply just one edit. We are going to apply several to get the end result we are after. Start with Levels to get the overall brightness of the image dialled in first. Levels can be found in the Basic category.



**4** Now, if you look in the Photo Bin, back at the main Guided Home screen, the photo will have a small icon in its top right corner that indicates it has edits applied. Then, you can go to the Colour category and choose Enhance Colours to add more vividness to the photo.



**6** Finally, back in the Basics category, click Lighten and Darken and use the three Shadows, Highlights and Midtones sliders to make final tweaks to the image. The Highlights have been reduced to bring more detail back into the brightest areas. At this point you can click Next and then save your image.



# Using the Photo Editor Expert Mode

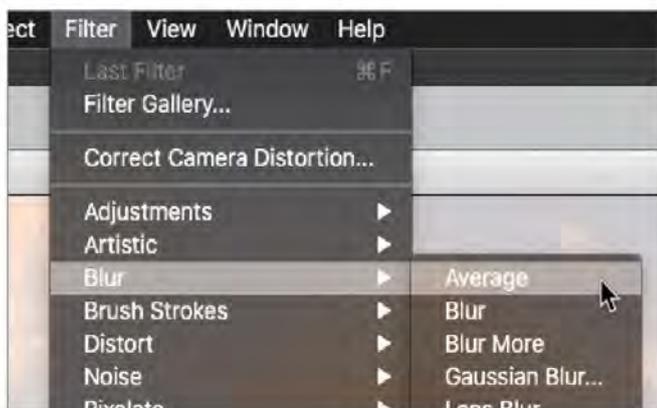
Don't be put off by the title of Expert. In this case, you get more tools to play with and you can actually be more involved in the editing process. You can switch out to another mode, but to truly unlock the power of the program, you will want to try out some image editing in this mode.



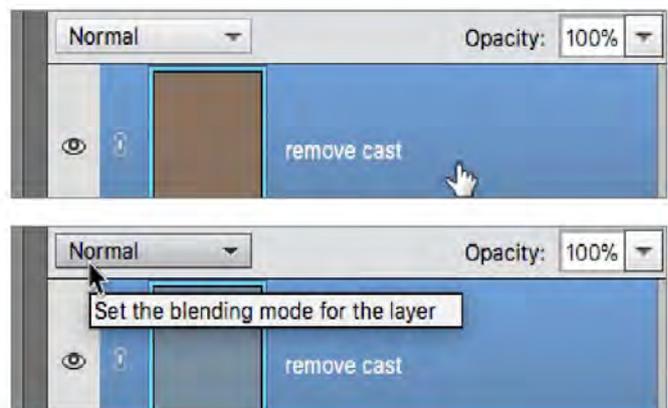
**1** We have opened another image that needs some fixing. It is a sunrise on the moors that is a little underexposed and needs some work to bring out the foreground, while keeping the sky relatively untouched, since that is quite well exposed. This is where the use of layers and masks will help us out.



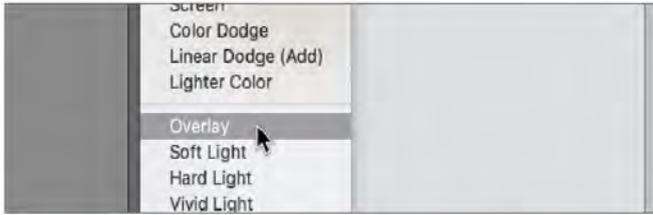
**2** First, the colour balance needs to be adjusted. The image is a little too magenta and warm, particularly if you look at the colour of the grass. This can be altered by using a really simple trick that can be really effective and requires the use of layers to do it.



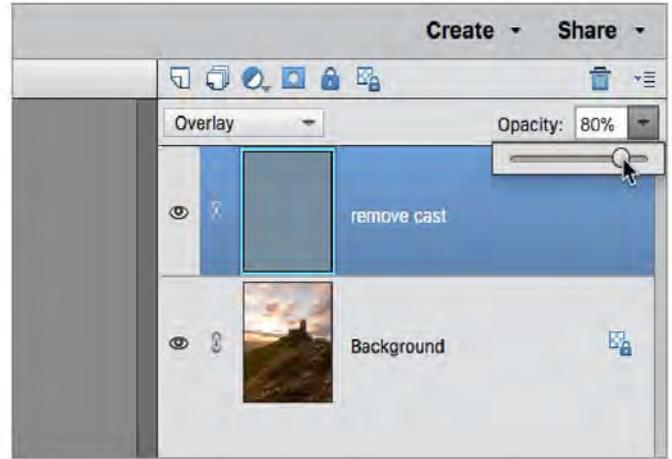
**3** Press **Cmd + J** to copy the Background layer. Name the new layer 'remove cast'. Then go to **Filter > Blur > Average**. This will blur the duplicate of the scene and average out the colours it contains into one colour. In this case, it turns a muddy brown colour.



**4** Make sure this layer is active then go to **Filter > Adjustments > Invert (Cmd + I)** to invert the muddy brown colour to a pale green hue instead. This colour, derived from the colour average of the original scene can be used to create a colour correction filter.



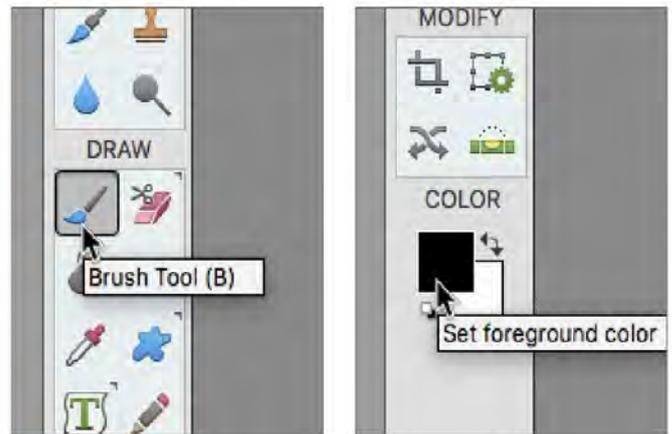
**5** Go to the Blend Mode button and from the dropdown menu that appears, choose Overlay as the blend mode for the 'remove cast' layer. This will blend the colour of that layer into the photo of the moors below it. You should see that the snow now looks a lot cleaner and whiter than it did.



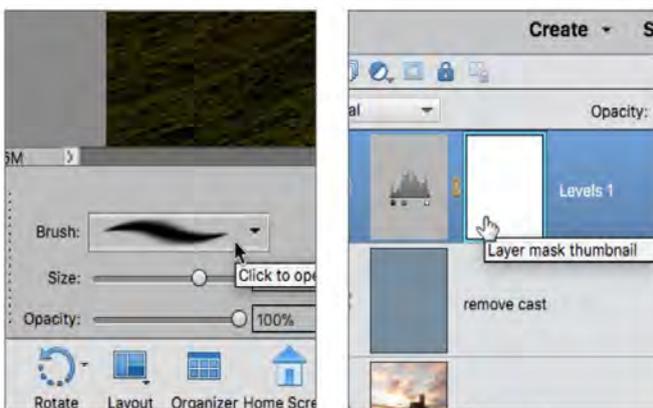
**6** Altering colour can be quite subjective and if you feel that the correction is too much, you can always go to the Opacity slider and adjust to about 80% to lessen its effect slightly if you wish. Now you can continue editing the image.



**7** Now to make the image punchier, click the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer button and choose Levels. Make sure 'Levels 1' is at the top of the layer stack. Adjust the Midtone slider so the sky is a bit darker. This will obviously make the entire image too dark but you can fix that next.



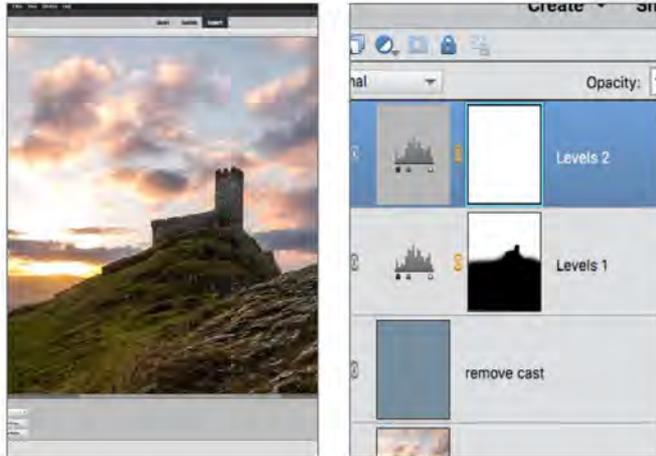
**8** Choose the Brush Tool (B) from the toolbar, then set the foreground colour to black. You can press D to default the colours so black is the foreground colour and white the background colour. Pressing X will swap those foreground and background colours over if you require.



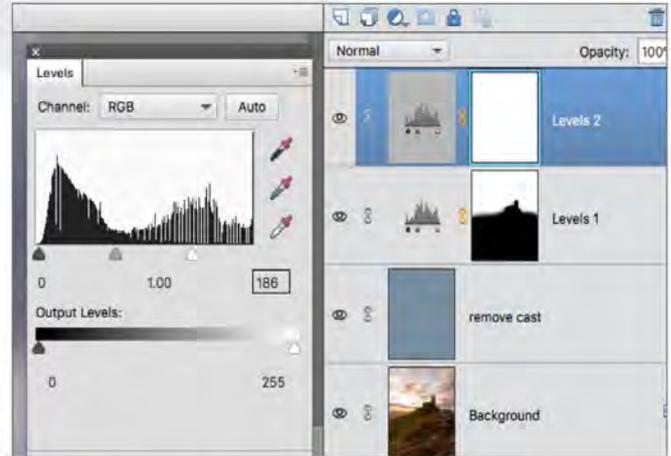
**9** When you choose the Brush Tool, the Tool Options panel will display parameters for the brushes. We need a large soft brush which can be chosen from the Brush Presets menu. Click on the Soft Round 200 pixels brush to make it active. Make sure the Levels 1 layer mask is active by clicking it.



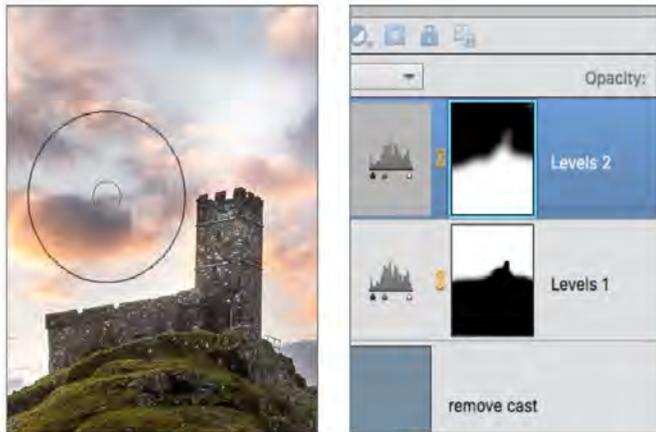
**10** You can now use that soft black brush to paint on any areas of the mask where you do not want the adjustment to be visible. In this case, we only wanted the sky to be adjusted so we painted over the rocks and foreground.



**11** When you paint over those areas, you are hiding the adjustment so they become their original brightness again. In fact, it would be nice to make the foreground rocks and snow brighter, so let's get another Levels Adjustment and add it to the layer stack. This will be 'Levels 2'.



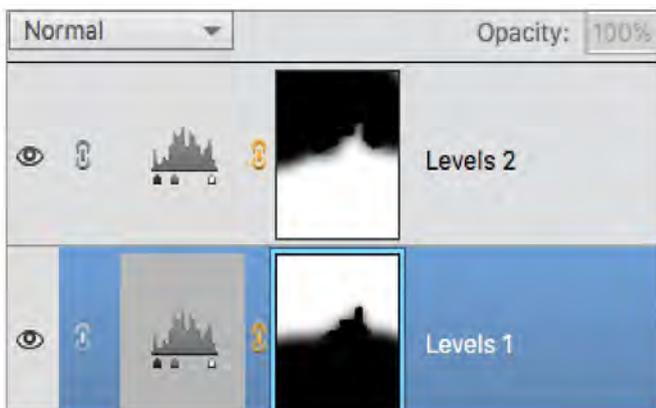
**12** Push the Highlights and Midtones sliders of the 'levels 2' adjustment to the left; as you do this, you will see the entire image become lighter. Concentrate on the foreground rocks and snow and adjust the sliders until they look nice and bright. The sky might be too bright but not to worry.



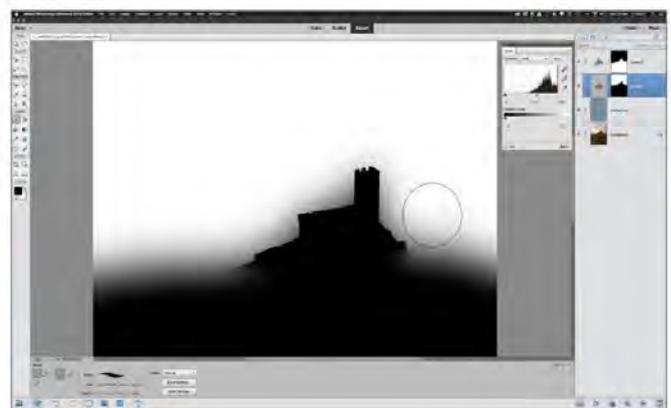
**13** Just as you did with the 'Levels 1' layer mask, paint with your soft black brush on the 'Levels 2' layer mask over the sky area and horizon. You are now concealing areas of the 'Levels 2' adjustment so the sky goes back to being darker again.



**14** If you want, to blend the masks better, you can keep the 'Levels 2' layer mask active and go to Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur and choose a blur of about 125 pixels to help blend the two adjustments you've made seem more seamless.



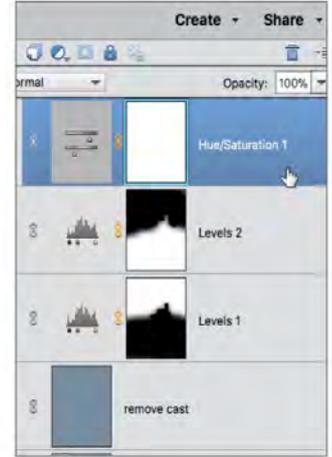
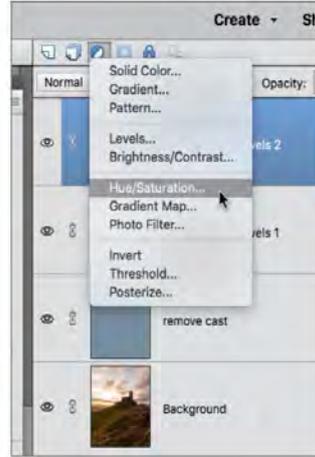
**15** There is no reason you can't add the same amount of blur to the 'Levels 1' layer mask as well. The softening of the two masks means there are no obvious joins betraying the fact that various adjustments have been made. Thanks to the use of layers, this has all been non-destructive editing.



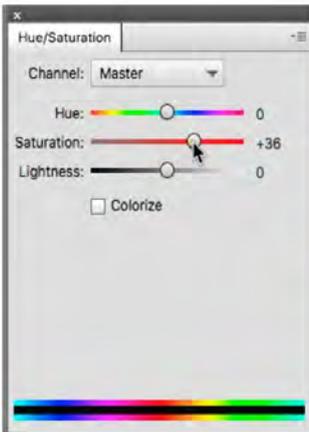
**16** Now that you have both the Levels Adjustments in place, you can revisit them at any time and tweak the settings to your heart's content. You can even go back into the layer masks for each and use your brush tools to refine those masks you applied in the first place.



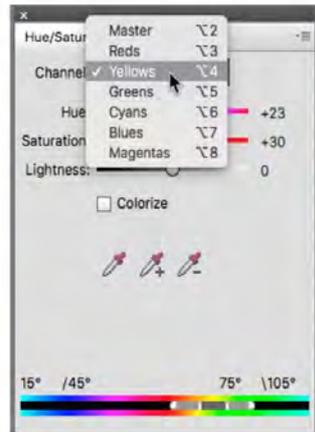
**17** The image has now been colour balanced and two sets of adjustments have brought some sparkle to the snow in the foreground and kept the sky dramatic in the background while the rocks now have some nice detail showing in them as well.



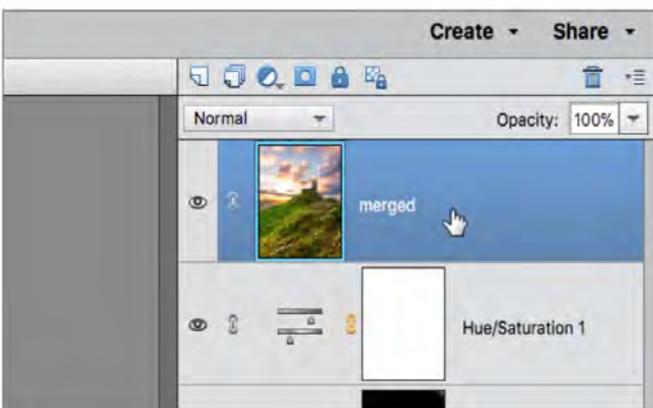
**18** Now let's turn up the vividness of the image. Click on the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer button and choose Hue/Saturation from the list that appears. A 'Hue/Saturation 1' layer will be added to your existing layer stack. Make sure it is the topmost layer.



**19** How much Saturation you add is a matter of personal taste but to capture the glorious colours of that sunrise, it's been pushed to +36. You will notice however that the grass could do with a little push to make it more vibrant.



**20** Click the Channel button and you will see how you can affect the saturation of the component colours. Select Yellows and dial up the saturation and push the Hue slider to about +23 to really bring out the vibrant green of the grass.



**21** At this point, you may want to perform more edits to the image. It is always good housekeeping to create a snapshot of the work done thus far. To do this, press Shift + Alt + Cmd + E. This creates a new layer which is a merged version of all visible layers. Name this layer 'merged'.



**22** You can now perform edits directly to the pixel data of the 'merged' layer, safe in the knowledge that if anything goes wrong, you still have all the original work on the layers below which you can use to create another merged version. You can also save your document as a PSD file when complete.



# Selection Tools

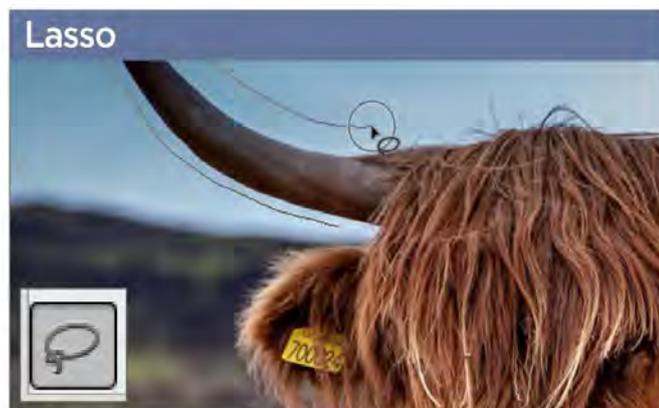
Some aspects of image editing will require you to select certain areas of a photo so you can either place it on another layer or edit it in isolation from the rest of the image. With Elements, you have a number of options for being able to achieve this and we cover them next.



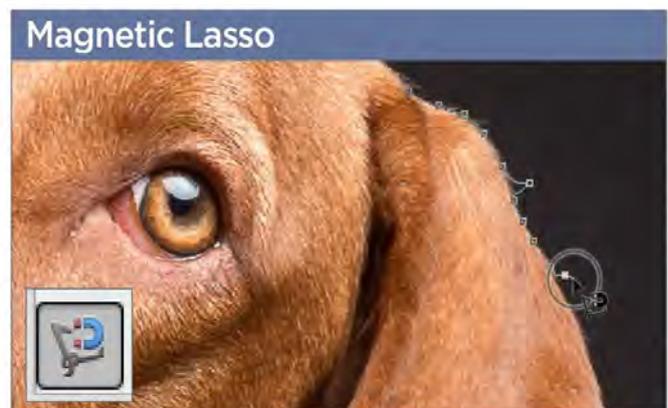
**1** This tool lets you make selections of square or rectangular areas of your image. In addition to making the selection, you can add to it, subtract from it and intersect with it. You can make selections of a fixed size, fixed ratio or normal aspects. You can also feather and refine the edge.



**2** The Elliptical Marquee tool behaves in the same way as the Rectangular Marquee tool and has the same tool options available. You can make circular and elliptical selections of any size or proportion. If you hold the ALT key, you can centre your ellipse over the cursor position.



**3** The Lasso tool can be used to make area selections from your image or active layer. The shapes you select with the Lasso tool can be completely irregular and hand drawn. When you join the lasso back up to the point where you started, the selection is closed.



**4** This tool uses edge detection to adhere to the edge of the subject you are attempting to select in the image. You can alter its parameters for more accurate detection in order to make it snap to the edge of your subject. Areas of high contrast work best with this tool.



### Polygonal Lasso



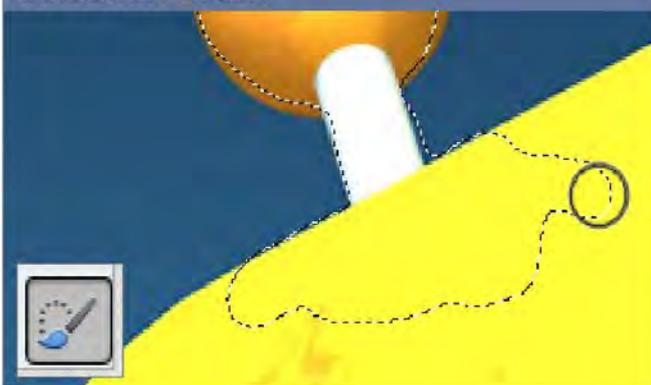
**5** The Polygonal Lasso allows you to draw point-to-point straight lines around your subject. This is good for geometric and straight-edged subjects where a perfectly straight line is required. Like the Lasso Tool, when you join back up with your start point, the selection is closed.

### Quick Selection



**6** The Quick Selection tool lets you paint a selection as if it were a brush. It uses edge detection to attempt to match your selection to the nearest edge in the image. You can alter brush size and settings and it works best on high contrast subjects that are in sharp focus.

### Selection Brush



**7** The Selection Brush is more of a freeform brush that lets you choose a brush type of certain size and hardness and paint a selection around your chosen subject. You can also choose to make it a mask instead. You can add or subtract from your selections in the usual fashion.

### Magic Wand



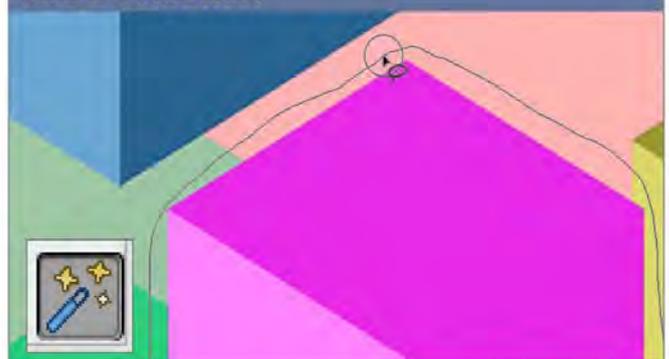
**8** This tool is useful for the selection of image areas that are the same colour and brightness. You can adjust its sensitivity, refine its edge and also choose whether it will globally select all areas of a chosen colour or just its nearest neighbours.

### Refine Selection Brush



**9** The Refine Selection Brush lets you make targeted adjustments to an existing active selection. In addition to adding or subtracting from the selection you can actually push the selection edge and smooth it by applying the refinement brush.

### Auto Selection



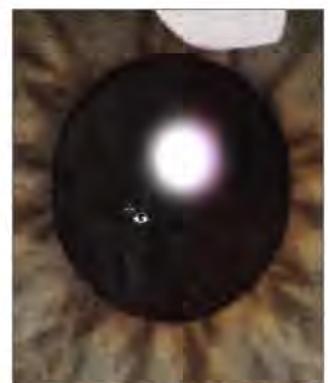
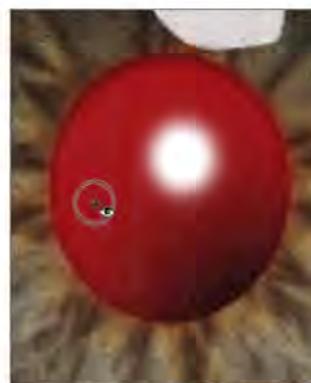
**10** This works in a similar way to Quick Selection except that you use Rectangular and Elliptical Marquees and the Lasso and Polygonal shapes to enclose an area for edge detection to work within. It works best with well-defined shapes that have good contrast.



# Cloning, Healing and Enhancing

Even with modern digital cameras, a lot of photos may have imperfections in them; for instance with dust contamination. This will be displayed as a black smudge on the final photo. Removing these blemishes is quite easy. The technology can also do much more.

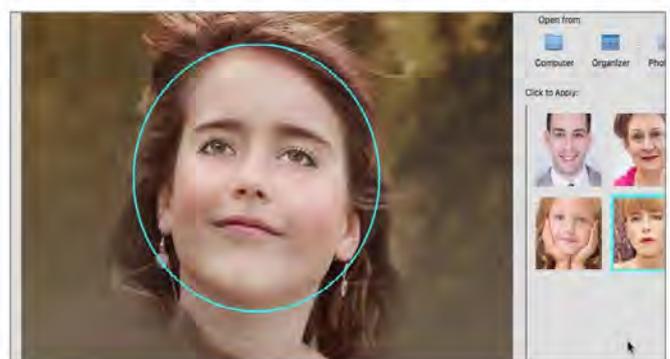
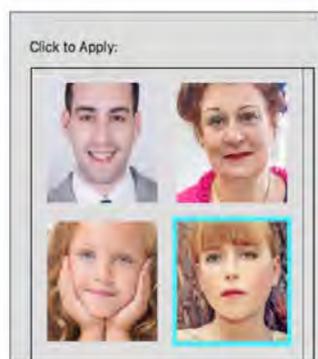
## Eye Tool



**1** Red-eye is caused by light from the flash of a camera reflecting off the blood vessels at the back of the eye when the pupil is wide open. If you happen to find a favourite photo where your subject has red-eye, then it is a simple process to remove it.

**2** Click the Eye Tool (Y) and simply click your cursor over the offending redness in the eyes of your subject. The tool will remove the redness and you can alter Pupil Radius and Darken values to make sure the red has been completely removed. It can also be set for Pet Eye as well.

## Closed Eye Correction



**1** Another great function available in the options panel is the function to open closed eyes. Click the Open Closed Eyes button to activate the dialog. The image will scan for closed eyes and circle possible candidates. Choose the one you want. You can then choose a set of open eyes to merge into the shot.

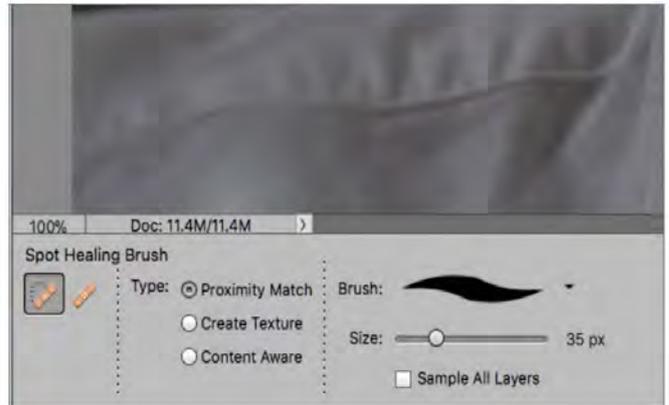
**2** Eyes that closely resemble your subject will work best or if you have another image where the eyes are open, you can load that and the program will automatically apply those open eyes to your current image.



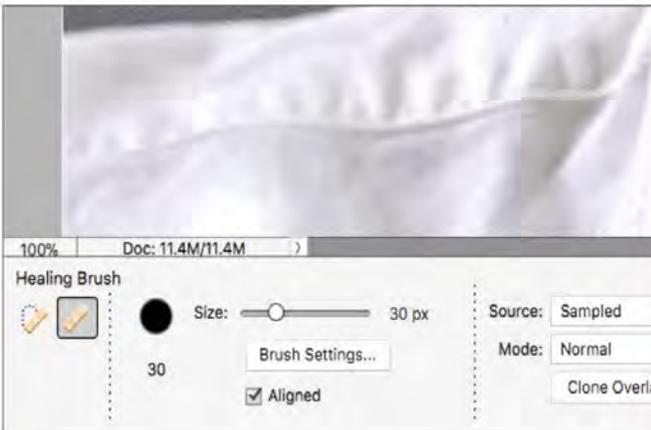
## Spot Healing Brush Tool



**1** The Spot Healing Brush is great at removing dust spots from photos and is also great for removing spots from humans too. If you have a portrait and the subject has some unwanted blemishes, you can use the Spot Healing Brush to click on the spot and it will use nearby pixels to fill the area.



**2** You can choose between Proximity match, Create Texture and Content Aware. For most of your subjects, you may find that you are switching between Proximity Match and Content Aware. You can adjust the brush size for smaller spots. With care, most blemishes and wrinkles can be removed easily.



**3** The Healing Brush is an older version of the Spot Healing Brush. It requires you to specify a sample point of a similar clean texture which is then cloned over your chosen area much like a Clone stamp when you click on the target blemish or wrinkle you wish to remove.



**4** When it comes to Healing Brush techniques, you will find that subtlety is the key. Spot Healing is not perfect and may require several attempts to get it right. Avoiding too many repeat patterns is important to creating a texture that doesn't look like it has been cloned.

## Smart Brush



**1** The Smart Brush uses edge-detection to allow you to brush areas of your photo and apply different effects to those areas. When you select the Smart Brush Tool (F) the options panel has an effects picker to let you choose which effect you want to apply to your photo.



**2** Choose an effect such as a pencil sketch effect and begin to drag your brush over the image, where you want the effect to be seen. You can change brush size and settings such as hardness and roundness and subtract from the current selection. Choose the Detail Smart Brush for more refined selections.



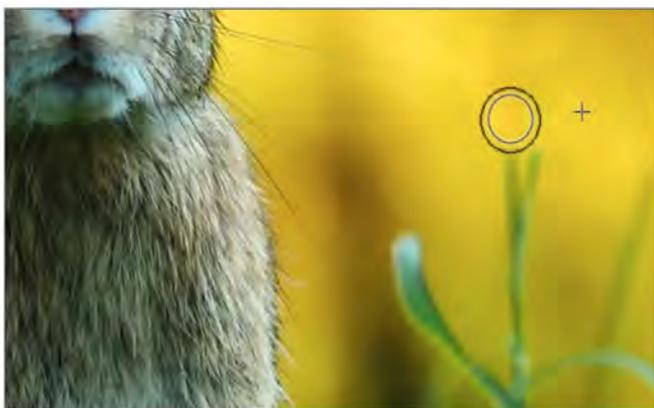
## Clone Stamp Tool



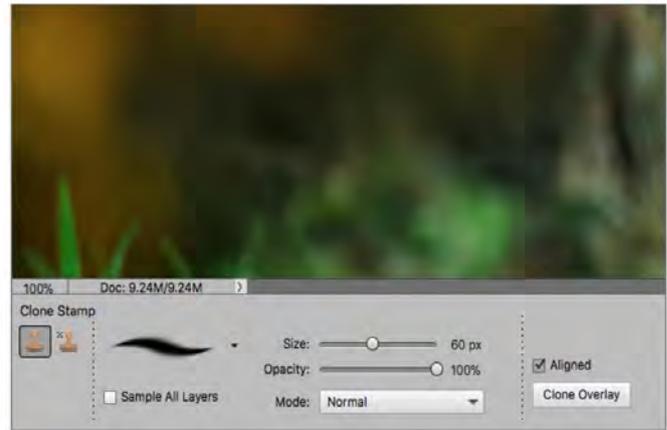
**1** After the Healing Brush Tool, the Clone Stamp Tool (S) will seem quite familiar. It copies pixels from one area onto another to remove things from your photos. Despite recent advances with the Content Aware and Spot Healing Tools, it remains one of the best ways to remove things from a photo.



**3** Here is a wildlife photo from which we want to remove the distracting blades of grass that are sticking up to the right of the rabbit. This is a good example of how cloning can quickly remove elements from your photos with minimal effort.



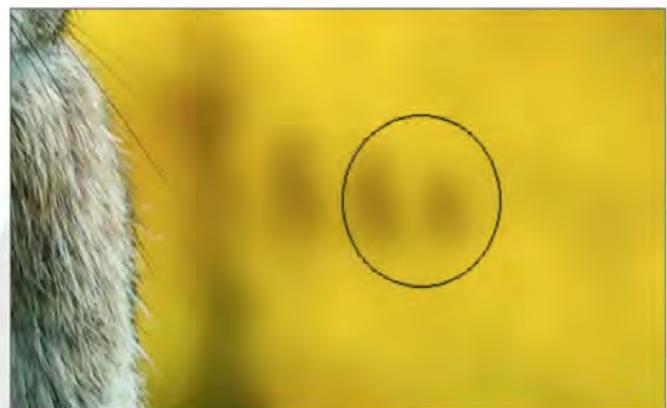
**5** Work your way down the grass stem, you can change the size of the brush at any point by pressing the left and right bracket keys on your keyboard. Take your time and don't be afraid to keep selecting new clone source points so the colours match the background when you clone out more of the grass.



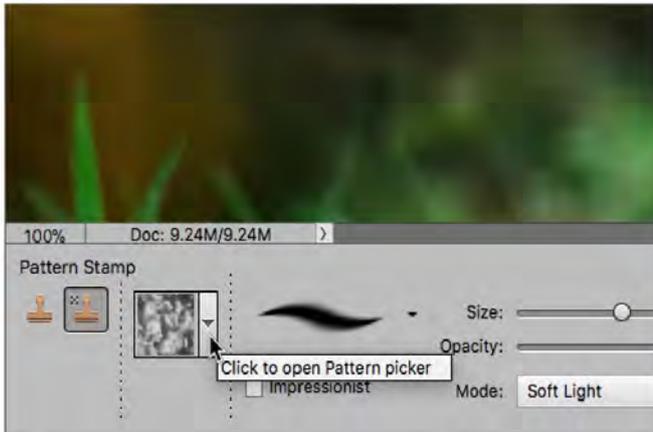
**2** Select the Clone Stamp Tool (S). In the options panel, you will have a number of parameters to choose from such as Size, Opacity and Blend Mode. The Aligned button, when ticked, links to and moves your source point as you move your cursor. Unticked, it uses the same source point each time.



**4** Press the Alt key and select an area right next to the tip of the grass as the source of your cloned pixels. Now you can clone that area over the blades of grass. If the colours don't match, you can reselect an area that more closely matches and doesn't stand out as cloned.



**6** One thing that really gives cloning away is a repeating pattern. If you see a pattern building up, you can press undo (Cmd + Z) to step backward through your last performed actions and change your clone source again to avoid the repetition of that pattern.

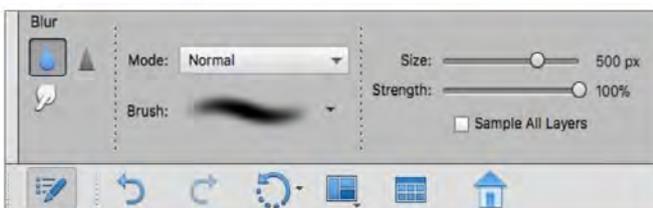


**7** In the options panel, you also have the Pattern Stamp available. As the name suggests, you can use this tool to apply a preset pattern to your image. Click on the pattern picker and choose the pattern you want to apply to your photo.

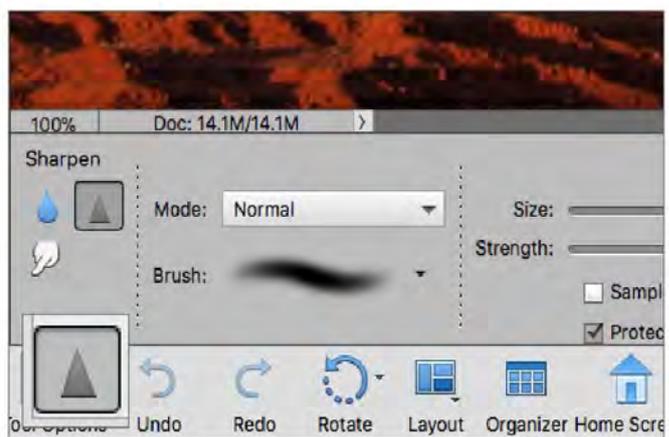


**8** You can change the Pattern Stamp's Size and Opacity as well as the Blend Mode. Choosing Soft Light, for instance, allows a softer blend of the pattern into the image. Click Impressionist to turn the patterns into paint dabs for a more artistic effect.

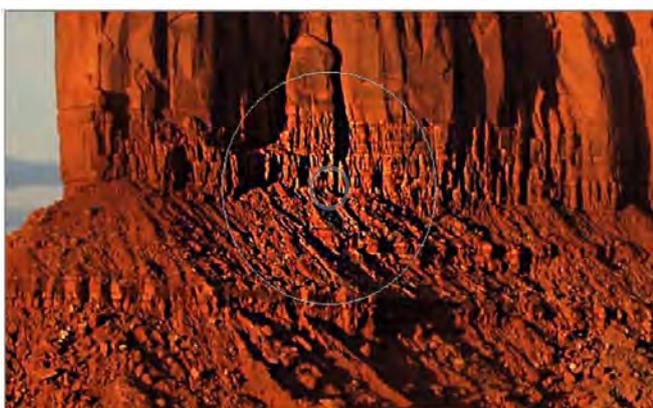
## Blur, Sharpen and Smudge



**1** The Blur Tool (R) is a fairly self-explanatory tool for adding blur to specific areas of a photo. You can choose a brush type and alter its Size and Strength values for a subtle or intense blurring of your subject.



**2** The Sharpen Tool (R) uses a brush tool to apply sharpening to your image. Like the Blur Tool, it is a more targeted method of adding sharpness to a photo. Choose your brush type and alter the Size and Strength values to get the desired effect.



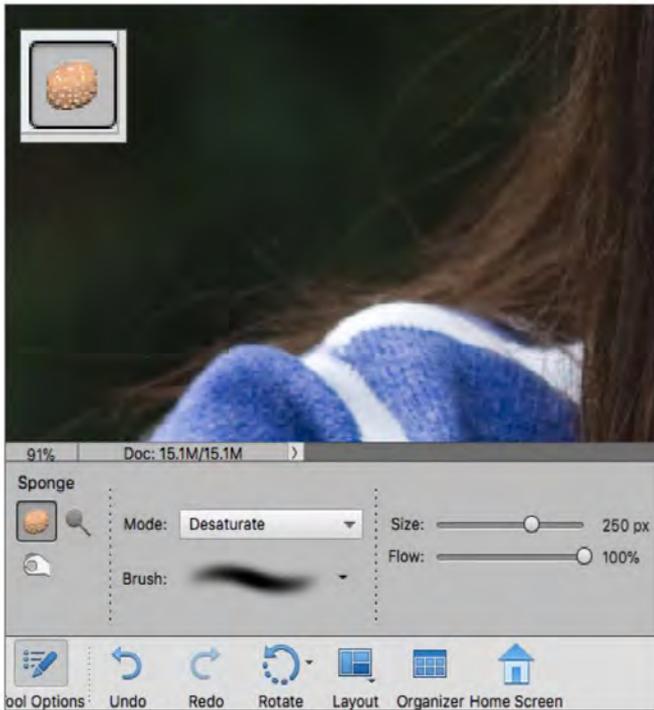
**3** Approach sharpening with caution since it is very easy to overdo it and ruin an image with over sharpening. Make sure the Protect Detail button is ticked and begin to apply the sharpening effect.



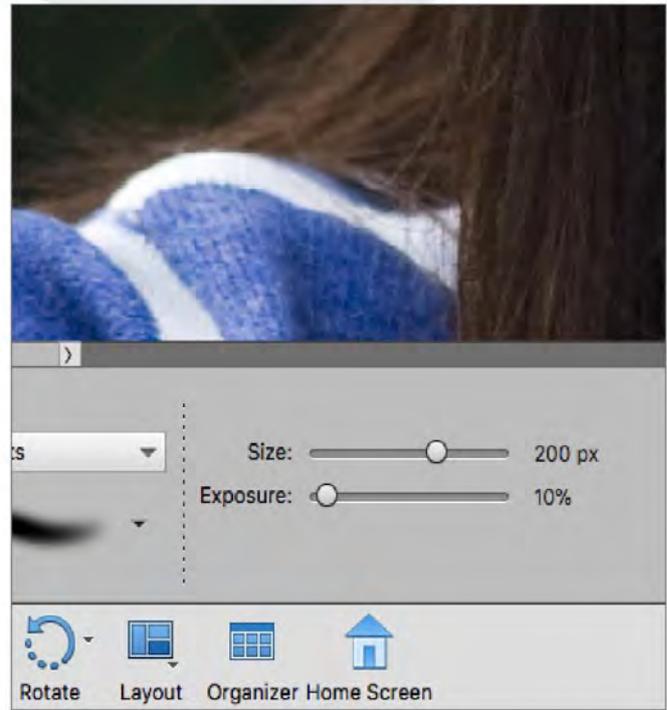
**4** The Smudge Tool (R) can be used to smear the pixels of your photo across the screen for a creative effect. Just like Sharpen and Blur, you can alter the brush type and set the Size and Strength of the effect. The Finger Painting button adds colour to the smudged pixels.



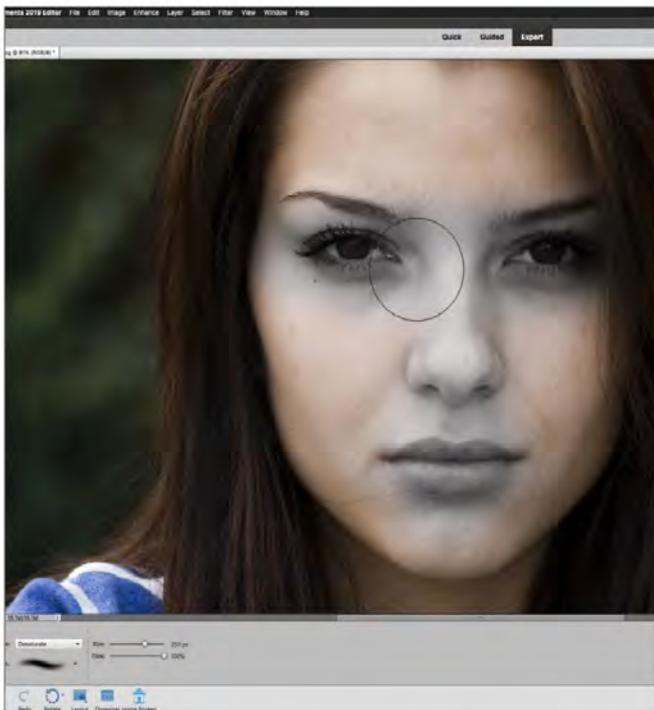
## Sponge, Dodge and Burn



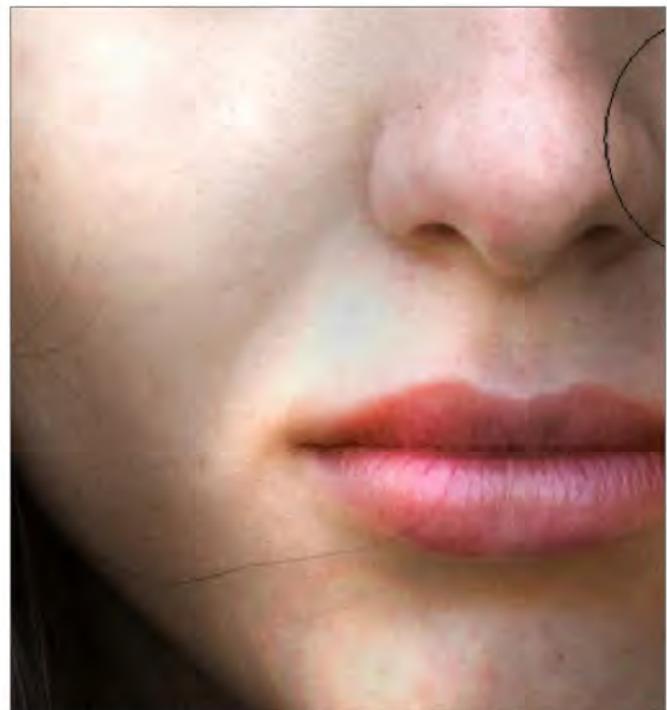
**1** The Sponge Tool (O) has two Mode settings of Saturate and Desaturate. You can control the Size settings as well as the Flow of the effect you are adding to your image. You can also set the type of brush you want to use to apply the effect.



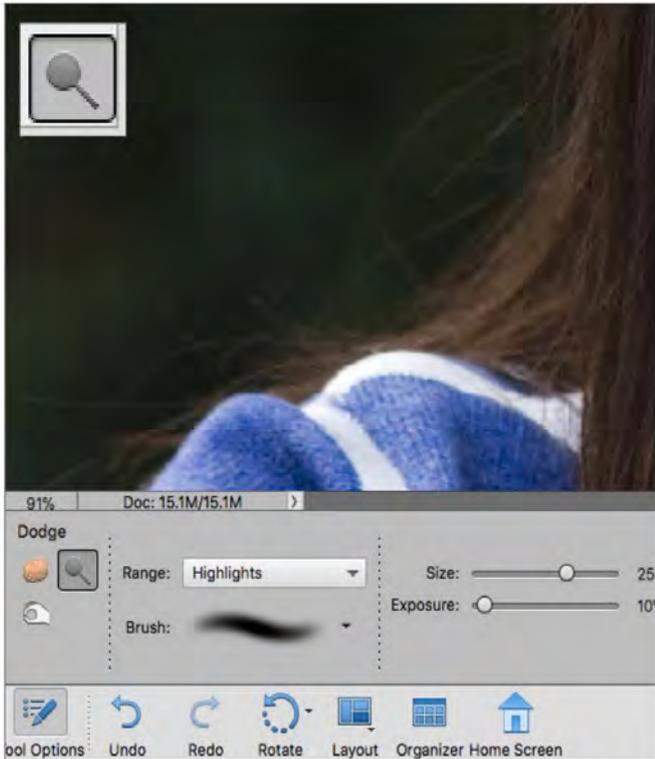
**2** It's a simple tool for adding targeted saturation or desaturation to the photo. It is recommended to set the Flow of these brushes to about 10%. Then gradually build up the application of colour saturation, the removal of colour entirely or just lessen the vibrance of areas in the photo.



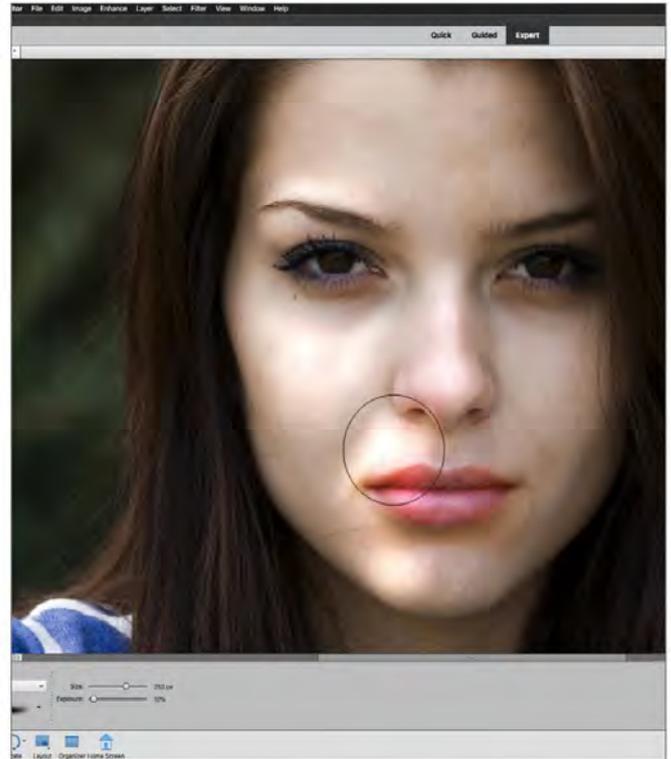
**3** Click and drag the Sponge Tool over the areas you selectively wish to Saturate or Desaturate. Continue to brush the areas to increase the amount of the effect you are applying. In this example, brushing using the Desaturate option eventually turns the affected areas to grey.



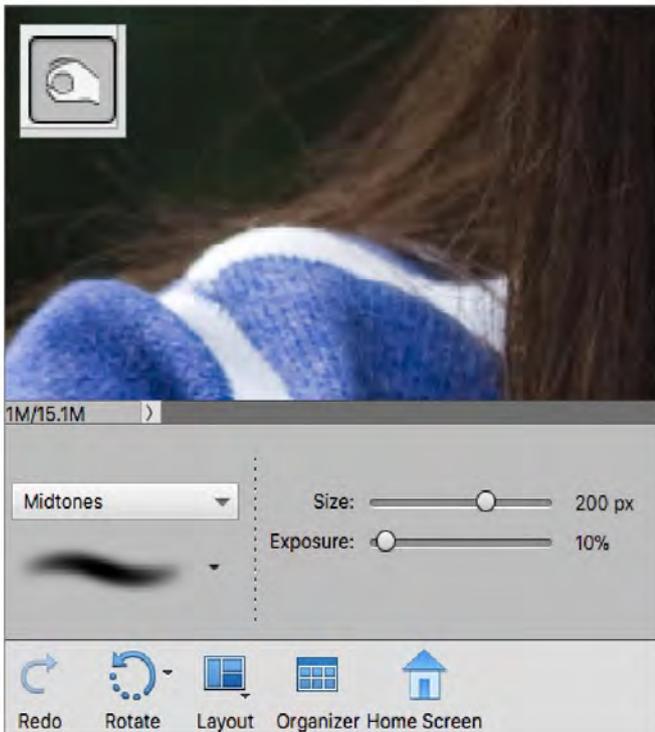
**4** The Dodge and Burn Tools are named after the techniques that were originally used in traditional film processing darkrooms. Dodging refers to selectively making areas lighter in an image and Burning is the opposite effect of making images darker.



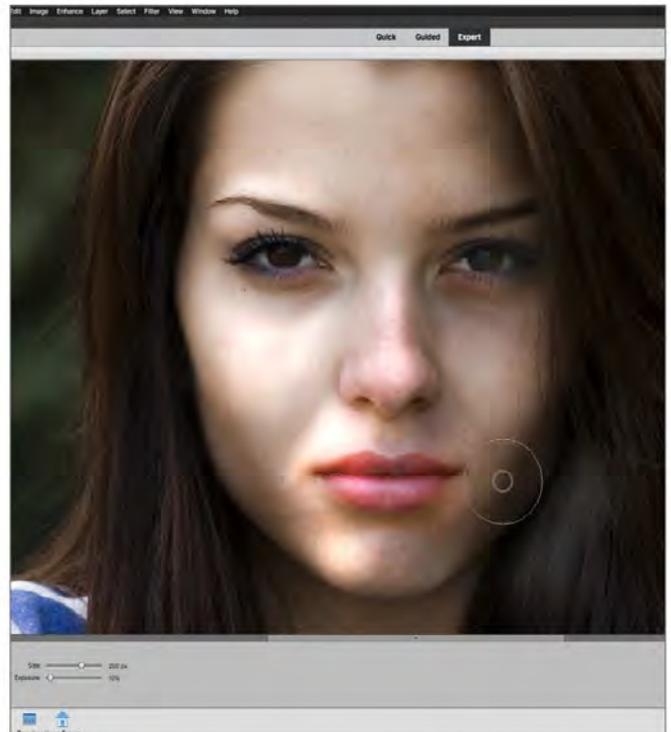
**5** The Dodge Tool can be used to lighten images. Use the Range button to determine if you are affecting just the Highlights, Midtones or Shadows in your photo for greater control of the final result. Again, using very low Exposure settings around 10% is recommended.



**6** You can selectively brighten areas of the image that you want to make lighter. These tools work better for images that start with lower amounts of contrast to begin with. High contrast images will have less need for these kinds of adjustments.



**7** The Burn Tool will selectively make parts of your photo darker. You can darken the Highlights, Midtones and Shadows by clicking the Range button again and adjusting the Size and Exposure settings of the brush. Subtlety is key to making it work, so Exposure settings of 10% are a good start.



**8** Now you can brush over areas that you want to be darker and create more contrast. Since this particular method is a destructive one, in that you are altering pixels, duplicating the base layer and working on a copy is a good way to avoid losing the original.



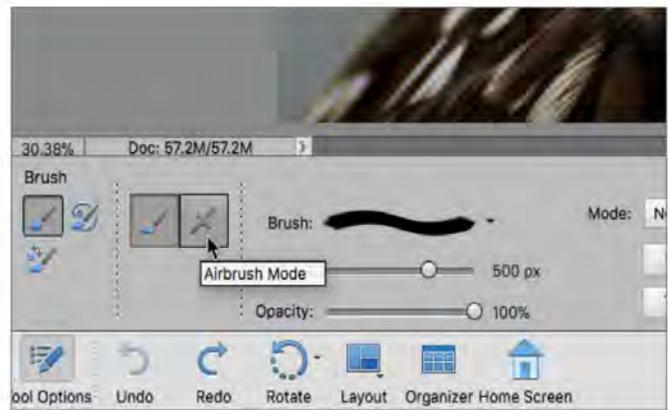
# Draw, Fill, Shapes and Text

The Draw section of the toolbar contains various elements to let you paint, draw, eraser and sample colours in your images. There are also a number of text options available for adding text effects to your photos and making masks in the shape of any text that you type.

## Brush Tool



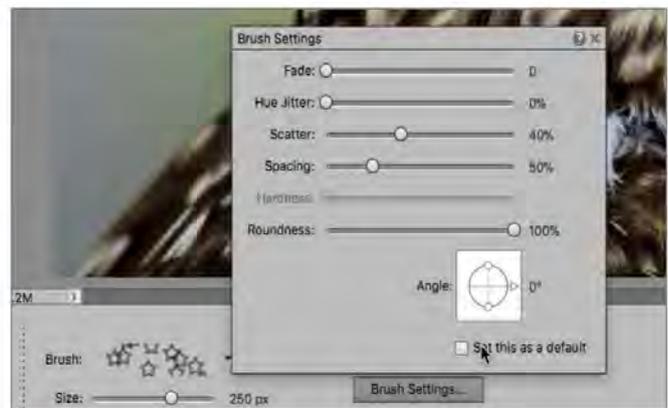
**1** The Brush Tool (B) is one of the most often used tools in the photo editor's arsenal. Whether you are painting directly over a photo, or adding brush strokes to a layer, the Brush Tool is designed to behave like its real world counterpart but with more powerful features built in.



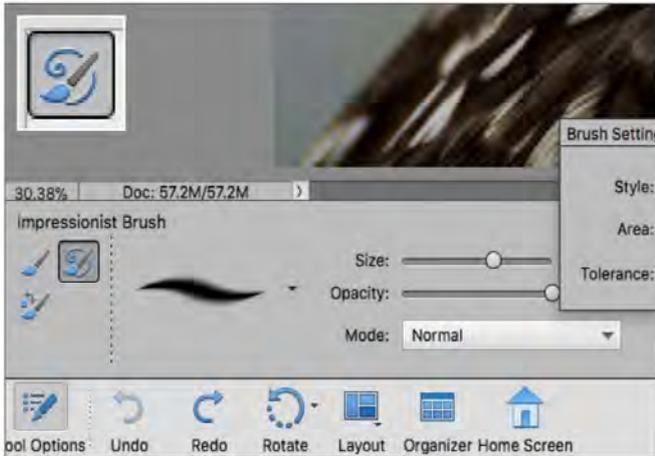
**2** When you click on the Brush Tool, the options available are quite varied. You can control brushes with your mouse or if you use a tablet, you can control it as if it were an airbrush with pressure sensitive effects for more artistic flair.



**3** You can choose any number of brush types from the brush picker and alter the Size and Opacity values. You can also load new brushes that can be purchased and downloaded from a large number of vendors specialising in photo editing tools.



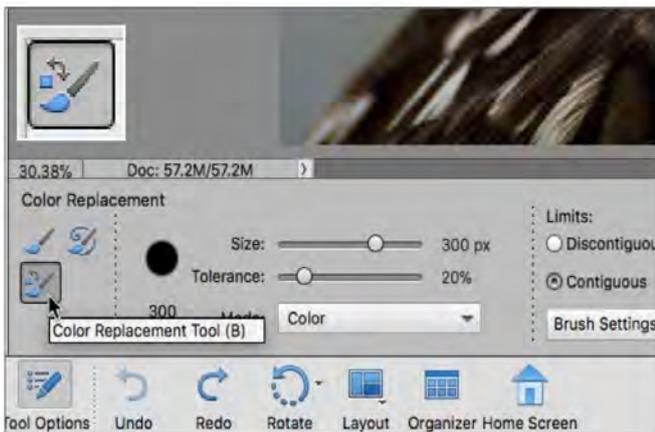
**4** You can choose the colours you brush with and also use the Brush Settings sliders to change how much the colours fade and alter with each brush stroke. You can also tell the brush how much Scatter or Spacing to use with each brush stroke you apply. Tablet settings are also available.



**5** Next to the standard brush is the Impressionist Brush Tool (B). Using its various Brush Settings you can turn your photo into a painting much in the style of the old impressionist painters whose works were rendered as a series of dots, strokes and swirls.



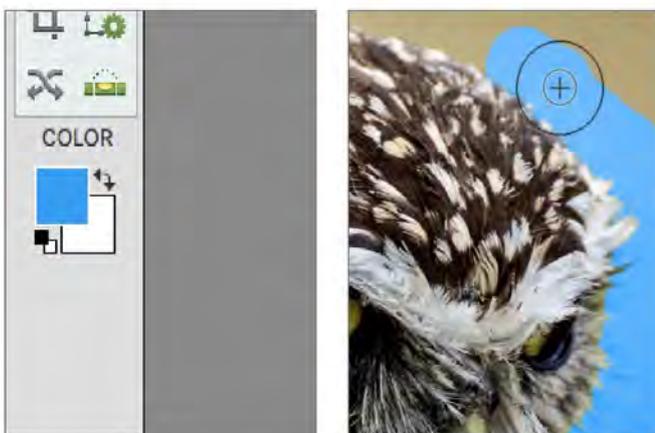
**6** When you paint with this brush, the image beneath the cursor is turned into a series of loose curls, swirls and daubs. The larger the brush size you use, the more abstract the image becomes. Using a brush that is too large will render the photo unrecognisable.



**7** The next brush is the Colour Replacement Tool (B). Select a foreground colour in the toolbar to use as the replacement colour. Once again, you have a number of tool options available including Size, Tolerance and Limits.



**8** Our example picture is of an owl set against a green background. The colour of the background can be replaced fairly easily since the owl itself contains no strong green colours that match the background too closely.



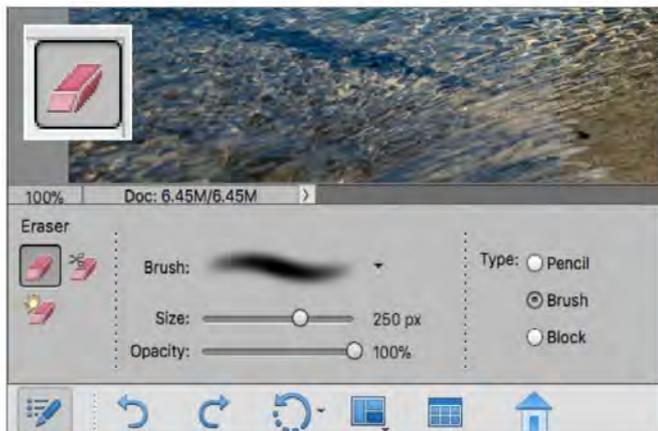
**9** The Colour Replacement Tool works by continuously sampling the colour directly under the cursor position. The colour beneath the cursor will then be replaced with whatever you have chosen as the foreground colour. You can select the Blend Mode used to effect how the replacement colour is applied.



**10** In the case of the owl image, dragging the Colour Replacement Tool over the green areas next to the owl replaces that colour; but the owl remains untouched since it is not the same colour as the colour beneath the crosshair of the tool.



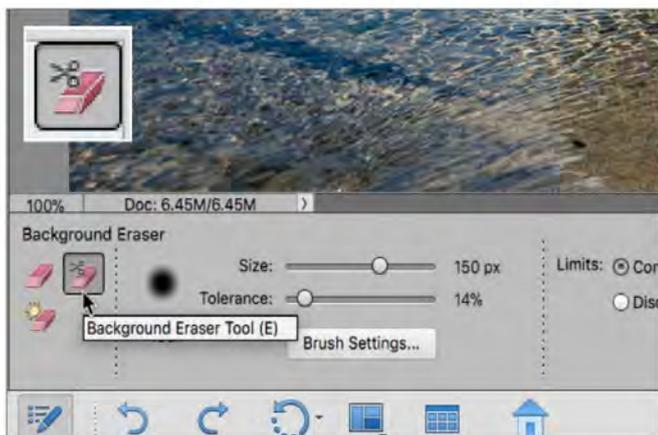
# Eraser Tool



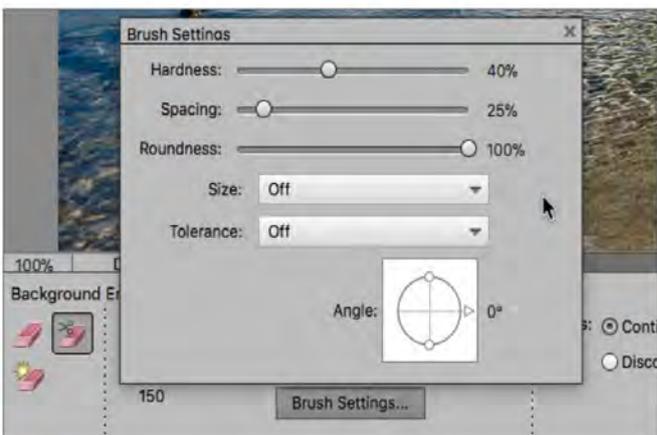
**1** Much like its real world counterpart, the Eraser Tool (E) removes pixels from your image. Whatever colour you have chosen as the background will be used to erase pixel data from the photo as if it were a solid coloured brush. You can also set the Size and Opacity of the eraser.



**2** If the photo is on a layer, then erasing pixels will reveal transparent areas instead. Again, if you alter the Size and Opacity of the Eraser Tool, those transparent areas can either be fully transparent or partially transparent, depending on brush opacity settings.



**3** The Background Eraser Tool (E) is a useful one for targeted removal of certain parts of an image. It behaves a little like the Colour Replacement Tool but in this case, any pixel colour beneath the cursor is erased, leaving the area transparent when it's on a layer.



**4** You can alter the Size and Tolerance of the brush, as well as the softness and spacing of the brush you use. Tolerance is key to setting the sensitivity of the brush to changes in colour. High Tolerance will mean more varied colours are removed under the cursor position.



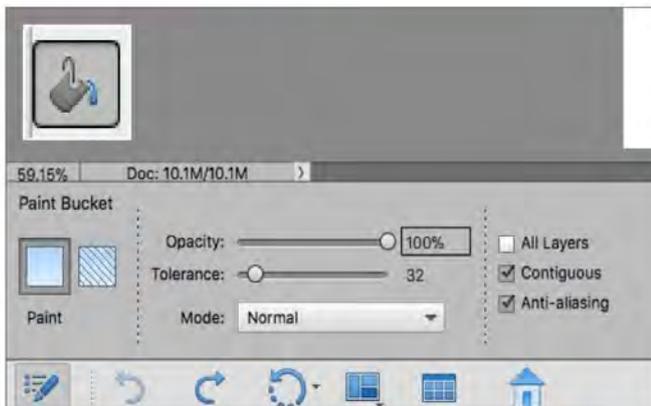
**5** In our example, the blue can be removed sky from the photo by placing the cursor over the blue areas to be removed. As you click and drag the mouse, any blue that falls under the cursor position will be removed, but the white clouds remain untouched since they are not blue.



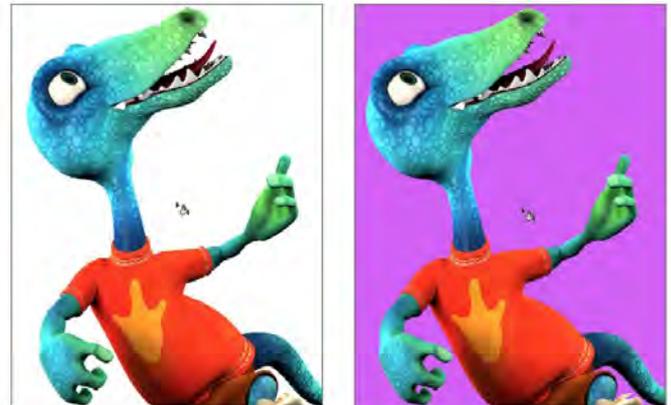
**6** The Magic Eraser (E) is a more global erasing tool. Set your Tolerance higher for more colours to be included or lower to pick out less shades of the target colour at the cursor position. When you click on the blue sky, large swathes of that colour will be removed with each click of the mouse.



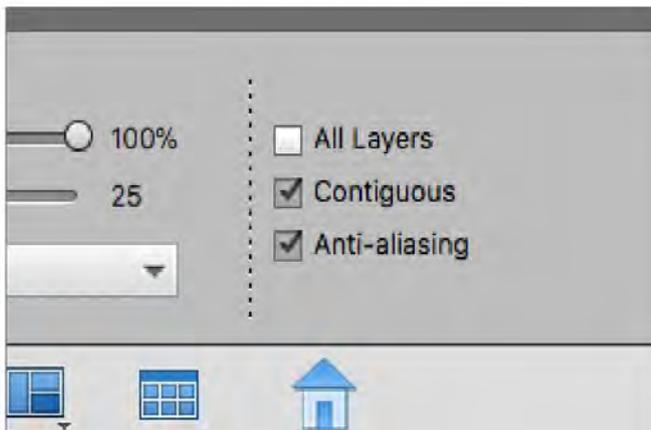
## Paint Bucket Tool



**1** The Paint Bucket Tool (K) allows you to fill areas with solid colours. You can set Opacity, Tolerance and Blend Mode. High or low Tolerance settings mean it will use edge detection to decide which areas can be filled or ignored.



**2** You can fill an entire layer, or it can be used to fill specific areas based on what edges it encounters. Our example has a cartoon character on a white background. His outline is quite well-defined so clicking with the paint bucket means the background can easily be filled with a colour.

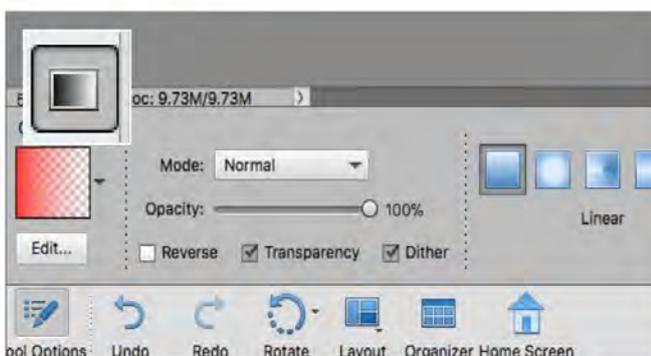


**3** You will notice there is an option for Contiguous fill. If it is ticked, only the nearest neighbouring colours will be filled. If the Contiguous button is unchecked, then all matching colours in the image will be filled, no matter where they are in the photo.

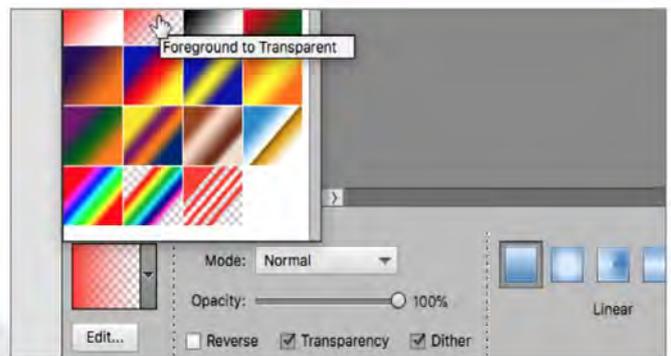


**4** In addition to the Paint Bucket, you also have the Pattern Fill option. Once again you have Tolerance settings and Opacity values to alter. Choose a pattern and use that to fill an entire layer or in the case of our cartoon, the blank background can be filled with texture.

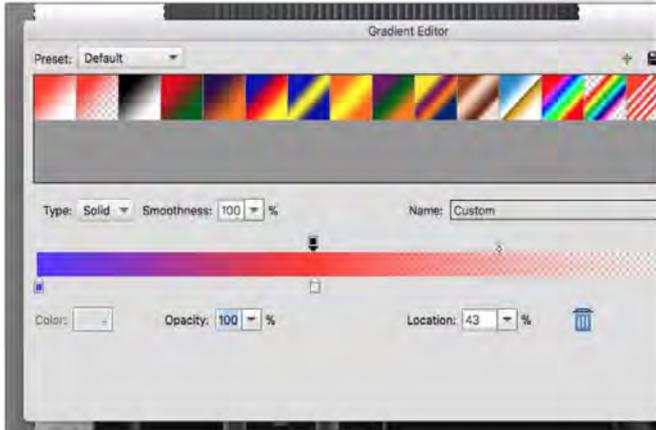
## Gradient Tool



**1** The Gradient Tool (G) lets you fill areas of your image or entire layers with colours that fade from one to another or can fade from one colour to transparent. The Gradient Tool does not use edge detection. If you need a filled shape, it needs to be defined by a selection.



**2** You can pick the kind of gradient you want to use by clicking on the Gradient Picker and choosing a preset from the list. They range from Foreground to Transparent to multiple colour gradients all at the click of a button.



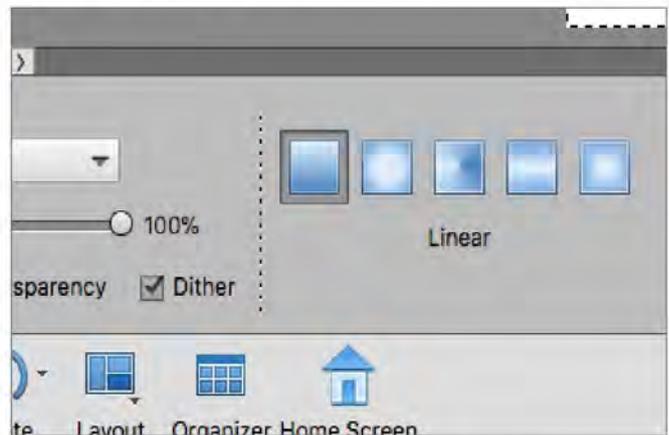
**3** If you want to make your own gradient, you can click on the Gradient Editor and add what are known as Colour Stops to a basic gradient, change their colour and define if they are solid or transparent. Any custom made gradients can be saved as a preset.



**4** Our example of a camera on a white background could use some colour. The background has an active selection around it to enclose the gradient when it is added. You can click and drag your cursor to draw out a start point and an end point for the gradient to follow.



**5** When you let go of your mouse, the current gradient will be applied and fills the active selection around the camera. The default Gradient Type is linear, meaning that the gradient travels in a straight path from start colour to end colour.

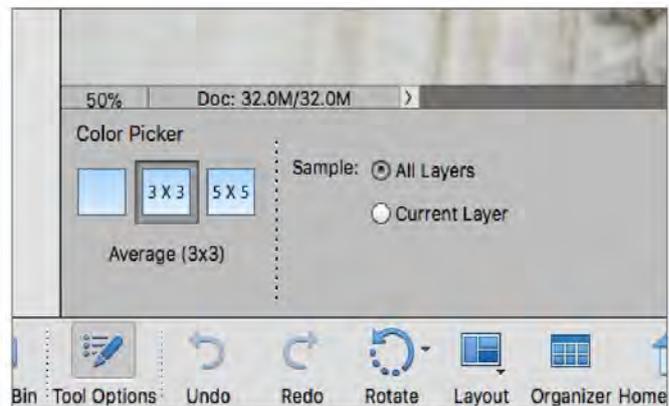


**6** If required, you can change the type of gradient you are using from its default. You can also use Radial gradients, Angle, Reflected and Diamond gradients. They can all have their Blend Mode altered as well as Opacity. They can be reversed and Transparency and Dither turned off.

## Colour Picker



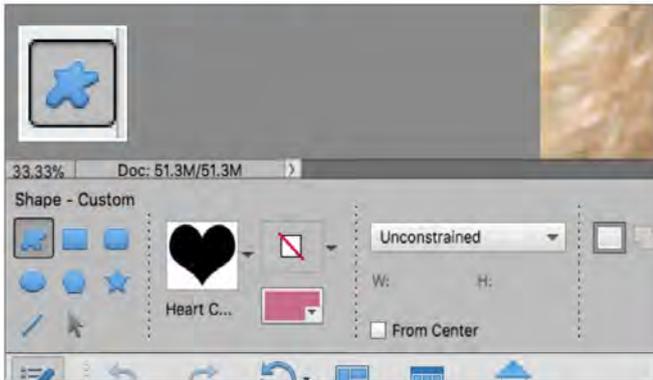
**1** The Colour Picker (I) does as the name suggests. When you choose this tool, it gives you a small eyedropper cursor that when clicked on a photo, picks the colour beneath the cursor position and makes it the active foreground colour.



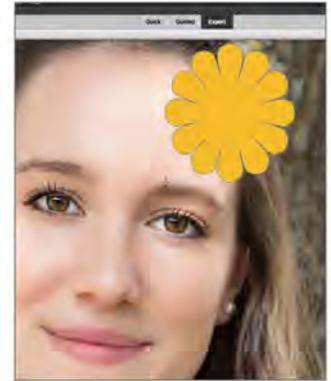
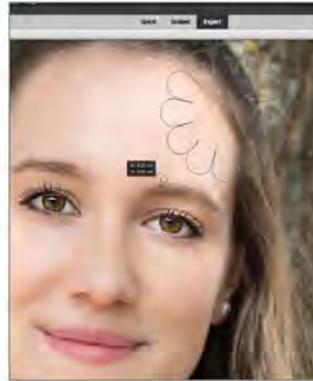
**2** You can choose whether it samples a single pixel or a 3 x 3 average or a 5 x 5 pixel area to create an average. The colour it samples can be across all layers or a single layer.



## Custom Shape Tool

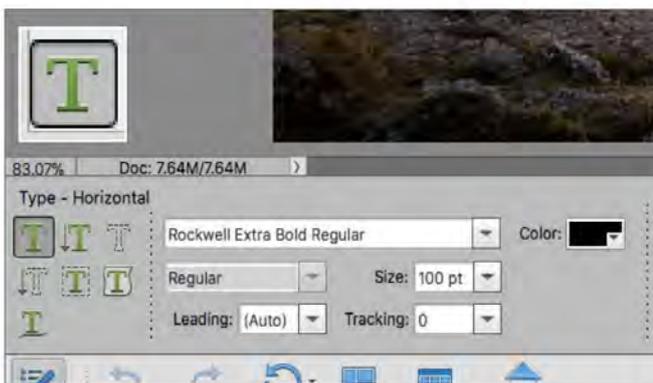


**1** Choose from a number of predefined shapes and add them as vector shapes on a new layer. Choose their colour and Layer Style from the Style picker. You can also choose whether they are of fixed size or unconstrained and if you add to a shape or subtract from it.



**2** Once you have chosen your settings, you can draw out the shape on your photo. You can click and drag from the corner outwards or choose From Centre to draw the shape out from the cursor position. The shape will fill with your chosen colour when you let the mouse button go.

## Horizontal Type Tool

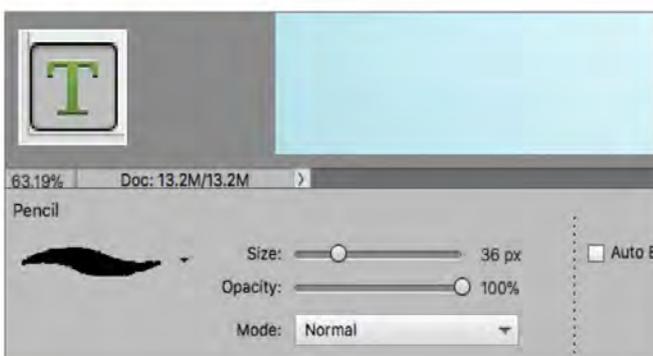


**3** The Horizontal Type Tool (T) gives you a multitude of text options. Choose your font, its colour and size. You can then type on your document and a new text layer will be added above your photo. The text can be manipulated and bent into a curve or other shapes for creative effects.



**4** You also have vertical text options, text for masking and the ability to fit typed text to a shape or path. Our example shows a butterfly's outline with sample text following the outline of that shape.

## Pencil Tool



**1** The Pencil Tool (N) is designed to act like a real world pencil and is a hard-edged tool that has a number of preset pencil tip shapes to draw with. You can choose the Size, Opacity and Blend Mode for your pencil strokes along with its colour.



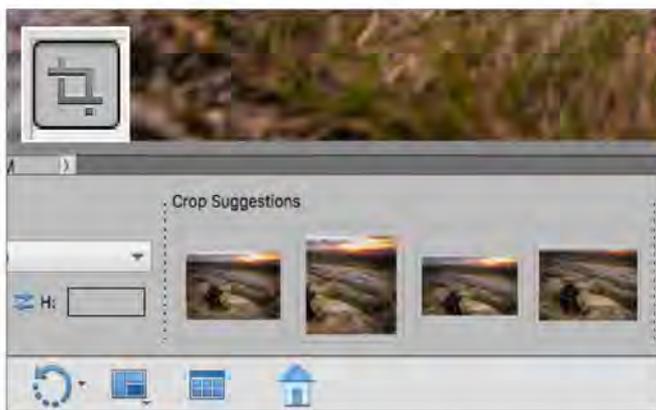
**2** You are then free to use your mouse or tablet, to sketch and draw with your pencil as you see fit. You can draw directly over your existing image or create a new layer and draw on that so as to preserve your original image.



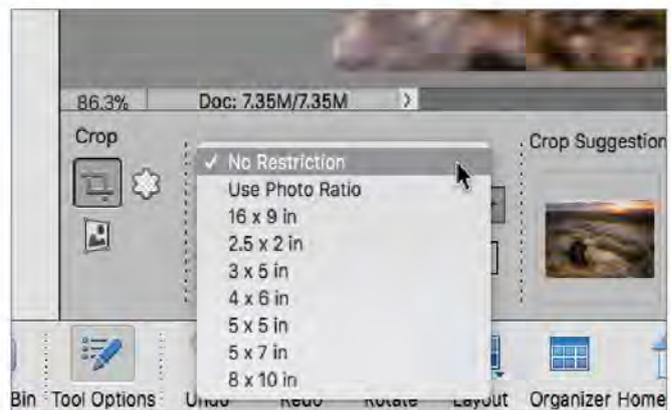
# Modify, Crop, Move and Recompose

The Modify section of the toolbar contains a set of tools that give you the ability to crop in a number of ways and to scale your images but protect certain parts from being affected during the scale. You can also move the subject of your photo from one part of the scene to another.

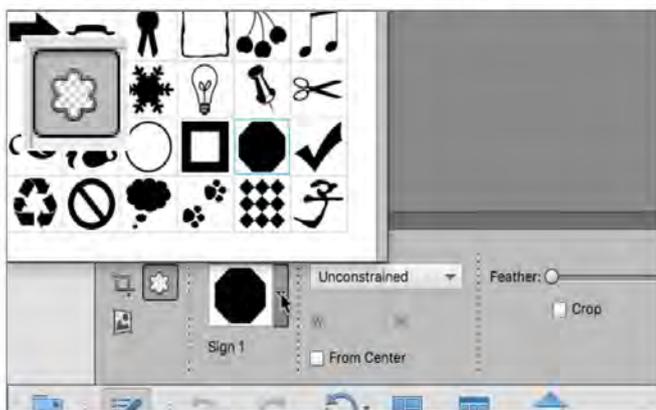
## Crop Tool



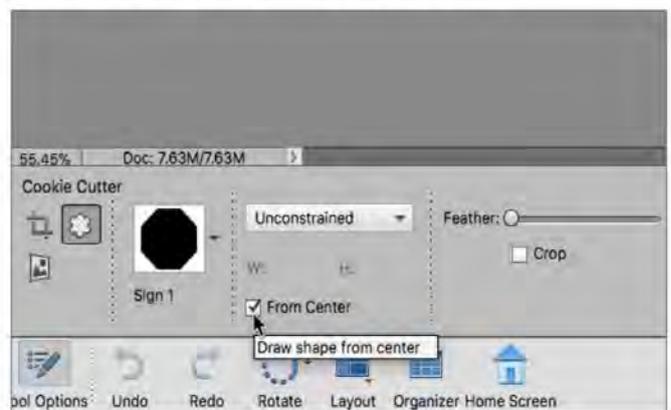
**1** The Crop Tool (C) is the most common method of cutting areas of your photo off in order to change the composition and proportions. When you click the tool, the options panel will display some suggestions for you as to how it thinks the image can be cropped. You can use those or make your own crop.



**2** You can use set proportions to crop or you can go it alone with no restrictions and make your own crop. Simply click and drag your mouse across the area of the scene that you want to be cropped and a gridded box will show you the current crop. You can click the green commit arrow to proceed.



**3** Within the crop tool options you also have the Cookie Cutter Tool (C), which lets you cut out images using a number of preset shapes. You can choose from all the available shapes such as butterflies, snowflakes, graphic symbols and much more.



**4** With your shape chosen, you can drag it over your image and scale it to cover the area of the photo you want to crop. If you tick the From Centre button in the optional panel, the shape will be drawn outward from your cursor position. You have the option to feather the crop if you want.



**5** If you hold the Shift key as you drag, you can keep the shape's proportions locked. When you let go of the mouse, the image will be cropped in your chosen shape. You then have options available that let you Rotate, Scale and Skew the shape until you have it how you want it.



**6** The Perspective Crop Tool (C) lets you draw a crop box around a specific part of your photo that is distorted and gives you a chance to crop and remove the distortion at the same time. You start by drawing a crop box around the area you want to crop.

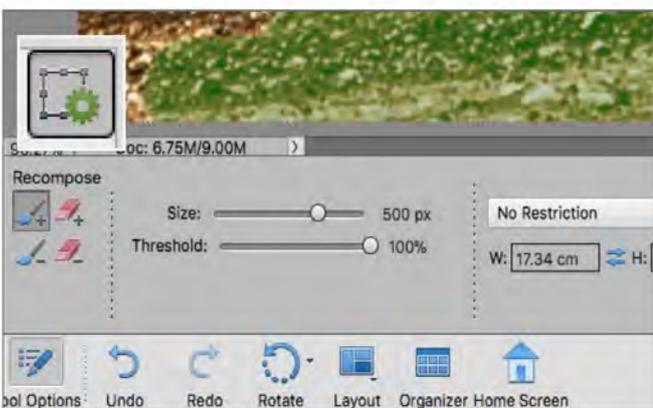


**7** You can then begin to manipulate the crop box to match the perspective of the object you are cropping. Use the control points around the crop box to drag the box out to match the subject. In our example, the road sign gives us some helpful straight lines to match the perspective.



**8** When you click on the green commit button shaped like a tick, the Perspective Crop Tool will crop and stretch out the image, removing the distortion. It may take a couple of attempts but it can help you rescue some tricky, distorted images.

## Recompose Tool



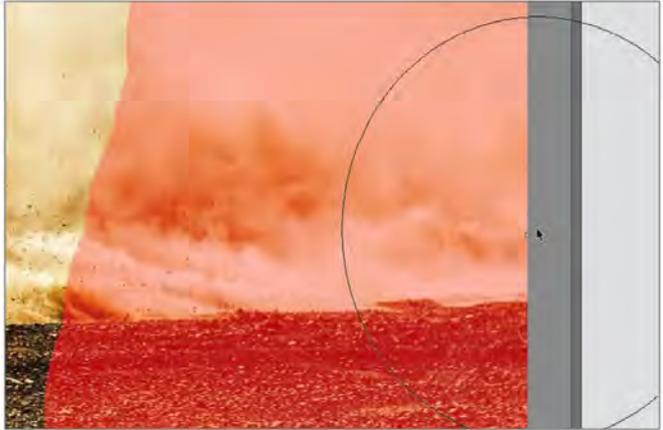
**1** The Recompose Tool (W) uses content aware scaling technology to let you scale images to a different proportion, but only scale areas with no detail. You can also select areas to remain untouched by the scaling process for a much better final result.



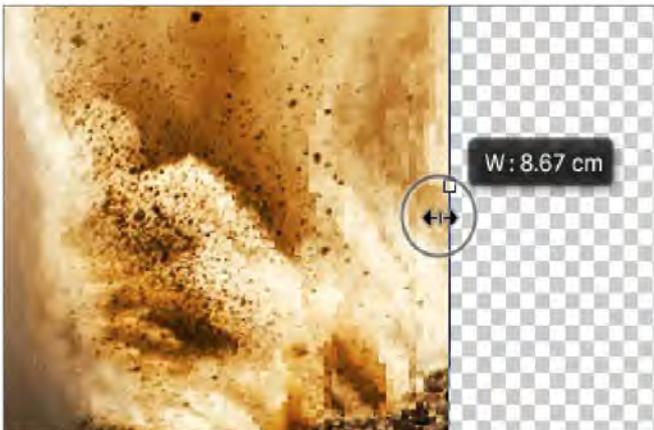
**2** Here is an example of a rally car with a lot of empty space to the right. It could be cropped but this image provides a good excuse to try the Recompose Tool. The options panel displays a number of tools to help you with the scaling process.



**3** You can use the Mark For Protection brush to highlight areas that you want kept intact and untouched during the scaling process. Similarly, you can also make areas that you want removed. You can adjust brush Size and Threshold and any scaling restrictions you wish to apply.



**4** Once you have marked out your image and have either selected areas to protect and areas to remove, you can click and drag on the control points around the perimeter of the image. In this case, we are going to drag the right middle control point inwards.

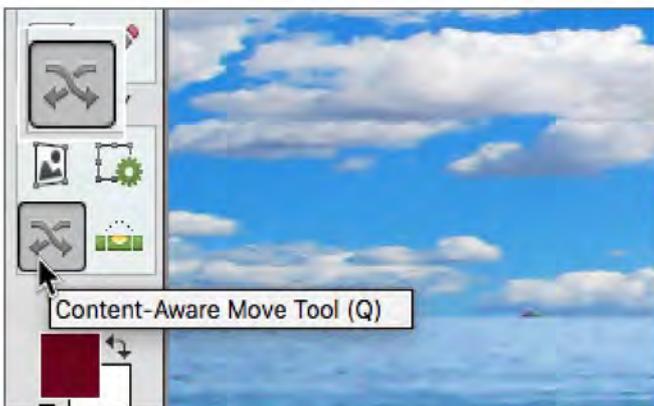


**5** You can begin to drag the control point inwards and as you do, all the areas that are unprotected will concertina together and the program will attempt to blend that pixel data together. The areas that are selected to be protected will not be crushed together.

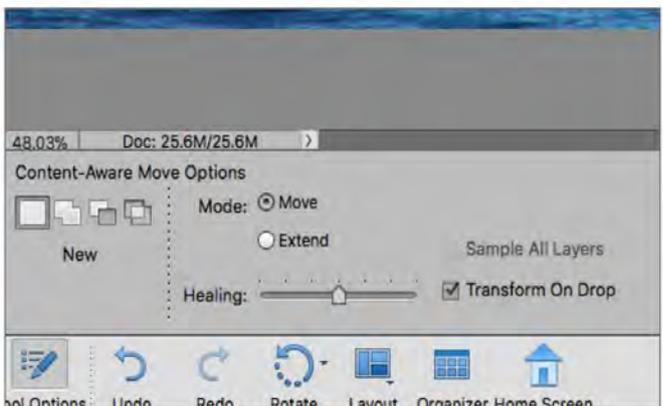


**6** The control point can be dragged all the way across the image. All the dirt and dust on the right of the image has been merged into the space that remains now the image is half the width it was originally, but the car is unchanged.

## Content Aware Move Tool



**1** the Content Aware Move Tool (Q) uses similar technology to the Recompose Tool but in this case it lets you move an object in your photo and place it elsewhere in the shot and blends it back in and fills the original gap left by the subject.



**2** The options panel gives you some simple tool parameters. You will need to draw a selection around the object in the photo you wish to move. You can add or subtract from the selection you've made by using the New, Add, Subtract and Intersect options provided.



**3** With the tool active, you can draw around the subject that is going to be moved. Be aware that areas with complex content can be a challenge and the area you move your subject to needs to be of a similar texture and colour for it to work properly.



**4** Enclose your subject in a selection and then drag it to its new location. The Healing slider controls how aggressively it tries to blend the image into the new location and also fill the gap it leaves behind. The Mode can be altered from Move to Extend to stretch your selection if required.

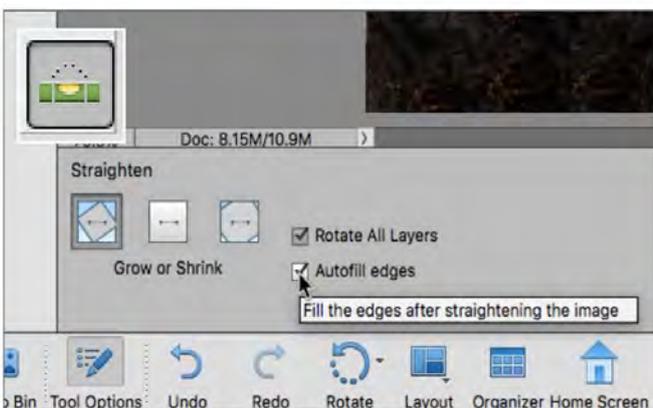


**5** The Content Aware Move Tool will blend the image together. It can be a hit and miss process and may require the settings to be tweaked. You can also try selecting more of the area around your subject for more blend data to be used.



**6** We tried the sailboat image and also a simple object on grass. The grass image yielded better results after a few attempts but it still needed some cleaning up with the Clone Stamp Tool to remove some obvious artefacts and blend in some untouched grass.

## Straighten Tool



**1** The Straighten Tool (P) will easily take care of wonky landscape photos and get them level again. You have a number of options as to how the image is handled once straightened. The canvas can grow as required when rotated, stay the same size or be cropped to remove the background.



**2** Simply click and draw along a slanted horizon line that needs to be level. When you let go of the button the horizon will be levelled. There is an option to Autofill Edges. When the image is rotated, any blank areas will be filled with nearby similar textures.