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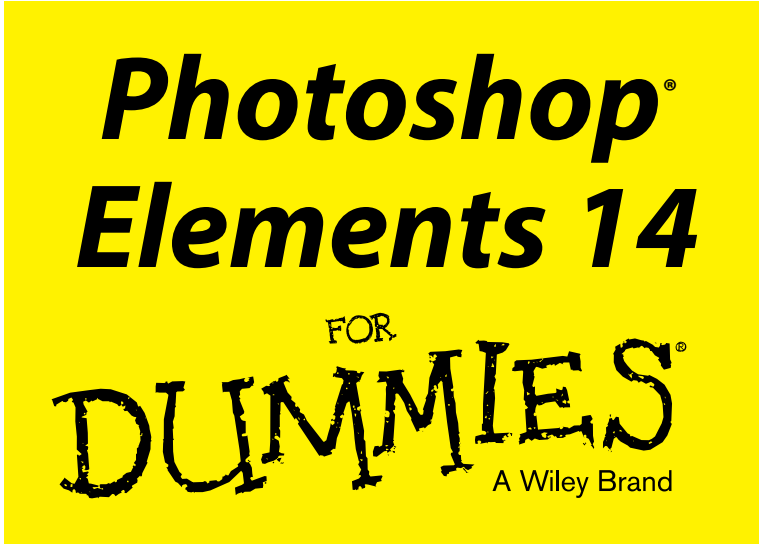
- Apply pro techniques to correct photo color and clarity
- Show off your artsy side with special effects and filters

IN FULL COLOR!

Barbara Obermeier
Ted Padova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by Barbara Obermeier and
Ted Padova

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Photoshop® Elements 14 For Dummies®

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Introduction

We live in a photo world. And Photoshop Elements has become a tool for both professional and amateur photographers who want to edit, improve, manage, manipulate, and organize photos and other media. Considering the power and impressive features of the program, Elements remains one of the best values for your money among computer software applications.

About This Book

This book is an effort to provide as much of a comprehensive view of a wildly feature-rich program as we can. Additionally, this book is written for a cross-platform audience. If you're a Mac user, you'll find all you need to work in Elements 14 for the Mac, including support for placing photos on maps and more consistency with Windows features.

As each software product is upgraded to a newer version, you sometimes find a whole bunch of new features that dazzle you and sometimes you find not so many new features but much more improved performance. Photoshop Elements 14 is focused on the latter. Do you remember Adobe Flash? Well, Flash is dying and much of the interface construction that was formerly based on Adobe Flash is now completely recoded. What this means for you is that you'll find faster and better performance because Adobe has abandoned old code and given us all new code from the ground up. You'll find performance and stability much improved, which means faster responses as you whiz through tasks that took more time to perform in earlier versions of Elements.

In terms of features, this version of Elements brings you some nifty enhancements, such as improved face recognition and much better geotagging. Face recognition is now based on clusters or groups, even when you don't ask Elements to recognize a person in a photo. Elements sort of guesses at similar faces and groups them together. You tag one face in a cluster and all the faces are tagged with the same name. With geotagging, you'll find it much easier to place people in geographic locations on maps.

Elements 14 continues with improvements such as bulk importing, which makes it easier for you to bring in a bunch of media from different locations in one click. After the media is imported, you find an improved view in the Media Browser where the Adaptive Grid (viewed when you show Details) displays information about your photo. Just mouse over an image and

Elements shows you a tooltip displaying important information about your photos and videos. Additionally there have been some enhancements to the Refine Selection tool. You'll find using this tool very helpful when you want to select a photo with a person having hair blowing in the wind. The Refine Selection tool now in Elements 14 does a much better job of selecting those strands of hair floating around.

You also find a completely new user interface when working with Guided Edits. The Photo Editor offers a new look to Edited Edits where options are listed in categories and you find images with examples for each edit. Photomerge has been moved to the Guided Edits panel to help you step by step bring together panorama scenes. Elements continues to make your job easier when performing a vast array of editing tasks.

The Photoshop Elements Editor also provides you some very nice new features. One of our favorites is the new Shake Reduction command. Try applying shake reduction to a photo and you'll be surprised to find that some photos were taken with an unsteady hand. There are also other new additions such as auto effects and the capability to straighten photos while in Quick Edit mode, and image dehazing.

Because Photoshop Elements has something for just about everyone, we know that our audience is large and also that not everyone will use every tool, command, or method we describe. We offer many cross-references throughout in case you want to jump around. You can go to just about any chapter and start reading. If a concept needs more explanation, we point you in the right direction for getting some background.

Throughout this book, especially in step lists, we point you to menus for keyboard commands. For accessing a menu command, you may see something like this:

Choose File➪Get Photos➪From Files and Folders.

You click the File menu to open its drop-down menu, click the menu command labeled Get Photos, and then choose the command From Files and Folders from the submenu that appears. It's that simple.

We also refer to *context menus,* which jump up at your cursor position and show you a menu of options related to whatever you're doing at the time. To open a context menu, just right-click the mouse, or Control-click on a Mac if you don't have a two-button mouse.

When we mention that keys need to be pressed on your keyboard, the text looks like this:

Press Alt+Shift+Ctrl+S (Option+Shift+⌘+S on the Mac).

In this case, you hold down the Alt key on Windows/the Option key on the Mac, then the Shift key, then the Control key on Windows/the ⌘ key on the Mac, and then press the S key. Then, release all the keys at the same time.

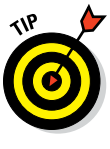
Icons Used in This Book

In the margins throughout this book, you see icons indicating that something is important.

This icon informs you that this item is a new feature in Photoshop Elements 14.

Pay particular attention when you see the Warning icon. This icon indicates possible side-effects or damage to your image that you might encounter when performing certain operations in Elements.

This icon is a heads-up for something you may want to commit to memory. Usually, it tells you about a shortcut for a repetitive task, where remembering a procedure can save you time.



A Tip tells you about an alternative method for a procedure, giving you a shortcut, a workaround, or some other type of helpful information.

Elements is a computer program, after all. No matter how hard we try to simplify our explanation of features, we can't entirely avoid some technical information. If a topic is a little on the technical side, we use this icon to alert you that we're moving into a complex subject. You won't see many of these icons in the book because we try our best to give you the details in nontechnical terms.

This icon points out online articles that expand on a topic in this book. To find all this great extra content, point your browser to `www.dummies.com/extras/photoshopelements`.

Beyond the Book

We have online content that you can enjoy in conjunction with this book:

- **Cheat Sheet:** The cheat sheet for this book includes a detailed look at the Elements photo editing workspace, Tool Panel shortcuts, tricks for selecting objects, and more. You can find it at `www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/photoshopelements`.

- **Online articles:** We couldn't fit everything we wanted into this book, so you can find additional content here: `www.dummies.com/extras/photoshopelements`.

  A few of the topics covered in the online articles are organizing and importing photos, dynamically updating saved searches, finding and loading actions, and adjusting brightness/contrast with the Smart Brush tool. But there's much more than these few topics. Be sure to check these out.

Where to Go from Here

Try to spend a little time reading through the three chapters in Part I. After you know how to edit and save photos, feel free to jump around and pay special attention to the cross-referenced chapters, in case you get stuck on a concept. After exploring Elements' Photo Editor, look over Part II, where we talk about organizing and searching photos. If you're ready to jump into more advanced tasks, check out Parts III and IV, where you learn how to make selections; layer images and effects together; add filters and type; and much, much more.

We hope you have much success and enjoyment in using Adobe Photoshop Elements 14, and it's our sincere wish that the pages ahead provide you with an informative and helpful view of the program.

Part I

Getting Started with Photoshop Elements 14

web extras

For Dummies can help you get started with lots of subjects. Visit www.dummies.com to learn more.

In this part . . .

- Open the Photo Editor and make quick and easy edits to one of your photos in Quick mode.
- Choose the right resolution for your image.
- Select the best file format when you save your image.
- Tour the Photo Editor interface so that you know how to switch among images and navigate the many panels and options.

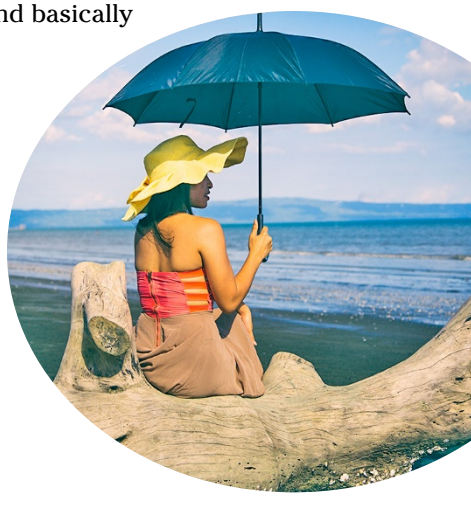
1

Getting Started with Image Editing

In This Chapter

- Starting the Photo Editor
- Opening, editing, sharing, and saving a photo
- Creating a new document
- Using Undo History
- Finding help
- Saving your files

Image editing is incredibly fun, especially with a tool like Photoshop Elements, which enables you to modify, combine, and even draw your own images to your imagination's content. To get the most out of Elements, you need to understand some basic technical concepts, but like most people, you probably want to jump in, play around, and basically just get started right away.



You're in luck: In Quick mode, Elements helps you make basic edits to your photos, like revealing your child's face darkened by a baseball cap's shadow or cropping out the gigantic trash can on the left edge of your otherwise perfect landscape shot. In this chapter, we help you jumpstart your image-editing skills by guiding you through Quick mode and how to share photos online, retrace your steps, save your edits, and more.

Launching the Photo Editor

Photoshop Elements has two separate components:

- **The Organizer** is where you manage photos. It's full of tools for tagging, rating, sorting, and finding your images. Part II helps you start using the Organizer.

- **The Photo Editor** is where you correct photos for brightness and color, add effects, repair images, and so on.

In this chapter, you work in the Photo Editor to make basic edits to a photo.

Here's how to start Elements and open the Photo Editor:

1. **Double-click the Photoshop Elements shortcut on your desktop or in your Applications folder (Mac) to launch the Elements Welcome screen.**
2. **Click the Photo Editor button shown in the Welcome screen in Figure 1-1.**

   The Photo Editor workspace loads and appears, as shown in Figure 1-2. By default, you see the Quick tab selected at the top of the Photo Editor workspace, which means you're in Quick mode (or right where you want to be for the purposes of this chapter). Quick mode offers a limited number of tools for adjusting brightness, contrast, color, and sharpness.

Figure 1-1: The Photoshop Elements Welcome screen.

When you first launch Photoshop Elements, you may see the eLive tab open. Click the Quick tab to see the editing options for Quick mode. See the section, "Getting a Helping Hand," later in this chapter for more about eLive.

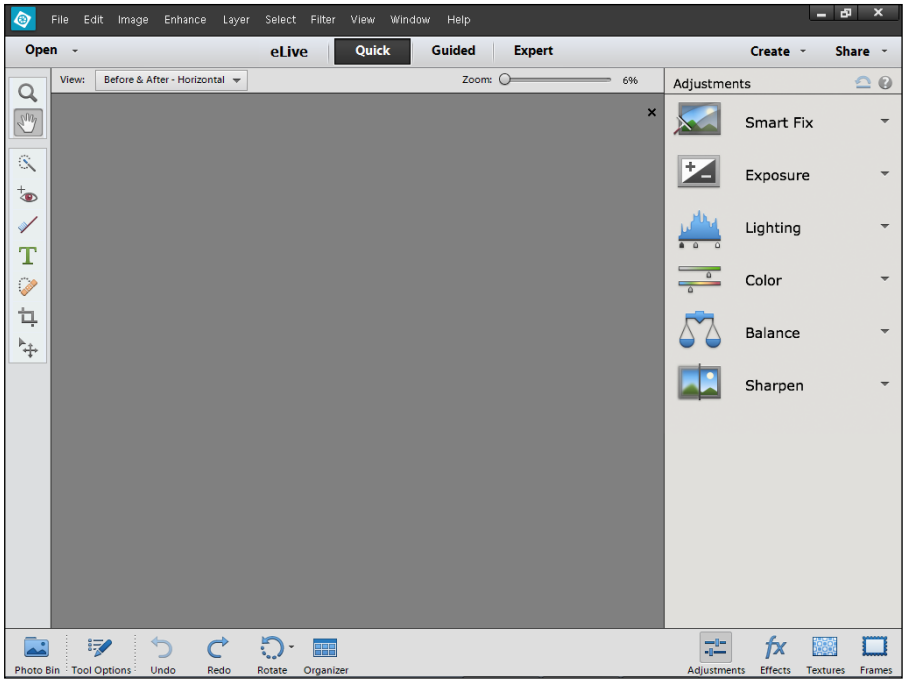


Figure 1-2: The default Photo Editor workspace with the Quick tab selected.

On the right side of the workspace, you see the Adjustments panel docked in an area dubbed the Panel Bin. When in any one of the three editing modes (Quick, Guided, Expert), you find different panels. On the left side of the workspace, you see a Tools panel. Interacting with the items in the Panel Bin and using tools in the Tools panel provides you an enormous number of options for editing, improving, and stylizing your pictures.

Making Basic Edits in Quick Mode

For beginning users, the Quick mode in the Photo Editor is both powerful and easy to use. Follow these steps to make some simple changes to an image:

1. **Open the Photo Editor and make sure the Quick tab is selected at the top.**
2. **Choose File➪Open.**

   If Elements is your default editing application, you can also double-click your photo file in Windows Explorer or the Mac Finder, and the file opens in Elements.

3. **In the Open dialog box that appears, navigate your hard drive to locate the file you want to open, select the file, and click Open.**
4. **From the View drop-down list (in the upper left of the image window), choose Before & After – Horizontal, as shown in Figure 1-3.**

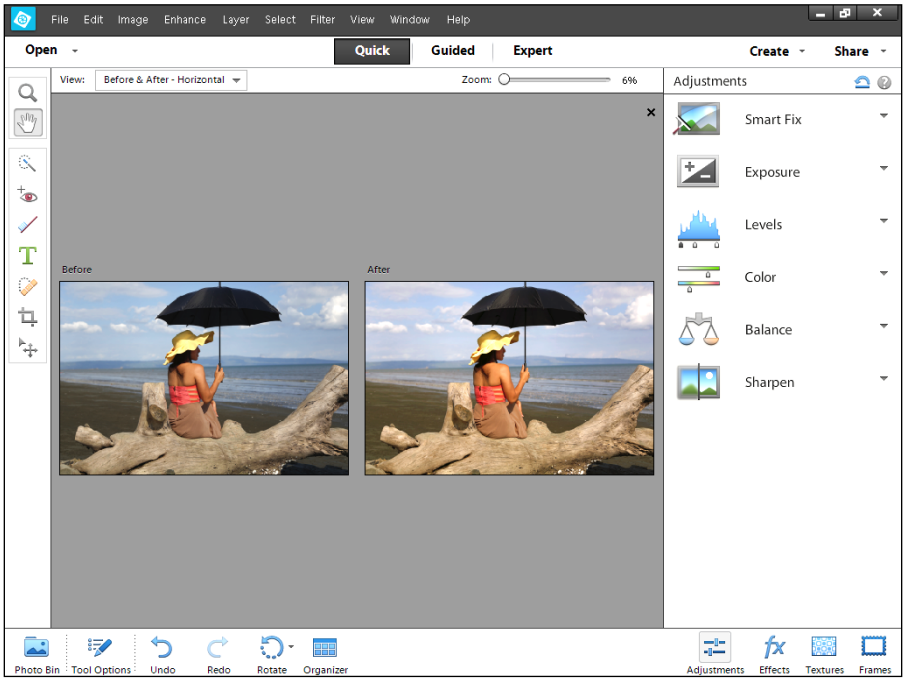


Figure 1-3: The before and after views in Quick mode.

5. **Make edits to your photo.**

   Here's an introduction to two simple edits you can make in Quick mode:

   - *Apply a Smart Fix:* Click Smart Fix in the Panel Bin to see the options. To begin with, click Auto at the bottom of the Smart Fix panel and select the After view to see whether you like the changes.

     As shown in Figure 1-3, several items are listed in the Panel Bin below the Smart Fix option. Click an item to expand it and move the sliders, or click the thumbnail images to tweak the overall brightness, contrast, and color. In many cases there isn't a right or wrong adjustment. Play with the options to bring it close to your overall vision for the picture. For a more in-depth look at correcting photos in Quick mode, flip to Chapter 10.

- *Crop the photo:* In the Tools panel on the left side of the window, click the Crop tool. You immediately see a rectangle on top of the photo. Move the sides to crop the image to your liking. When finished, click the green check mark, as shown in Figure 1-4, to accept your edit.

When making any one of a huge number of edits to your pictures, you often see icons on top of the image similar to what's shown in Figure 1-4. The green check mark accepts the edit you're making at the time the icons appear. The circle with a diagonal line is the Cancel button. Click this button when you don't want to apply the recent edit.

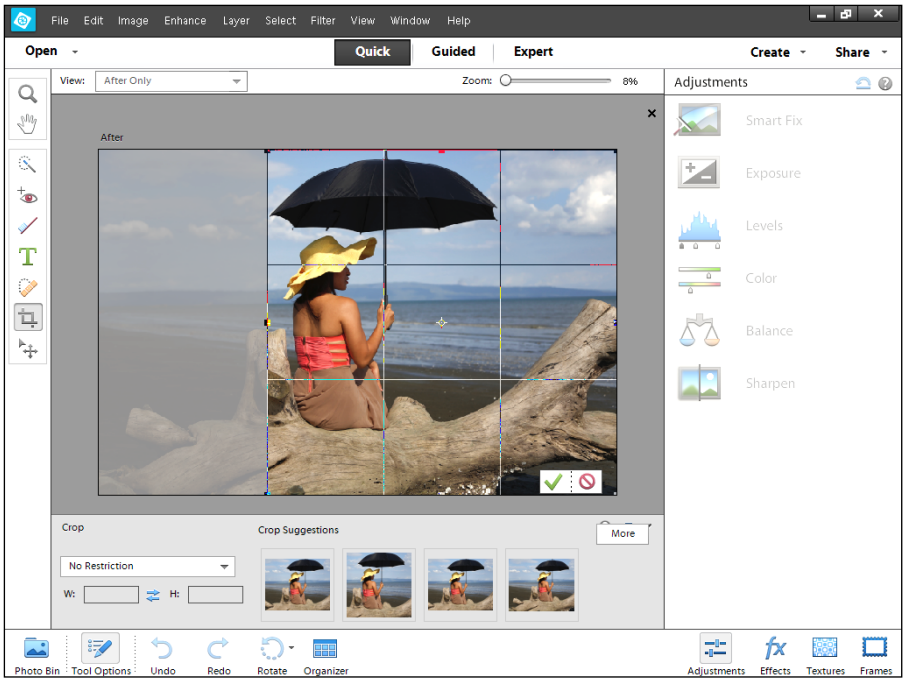


Figure 1-4: The Crop tool sized on a photo.

6. **Choose File➪Save As and, in the Save As dialog box that opens, provide a new name for the photo. Click Save.**

   Note: When you use Save As and give your image a new name, you don't destroy your original image. You save a copy of the original with the new edits applied. For more on saving files, see the section "Saving Files with Purpose" later in this chapter.

Sharing a Photo

After you edit your photo, you can print the photo to share with family and friends or post the photo on a social network.

Because sharing photos on social networks is extremely popular, we introduce you to the Elements sharing features with the following steps, which explain how you can use Elements to share your photo on Facebook:

1. **Prepare the photo you want to upload to Facebook.**

   Typically, digital cameras take photos sized very large — too large for an image that your friends and family will want to download quickly and view via Facebook on a computer screen or a mobile device. To adjust your image so it's the right size and resolution for viewing online, follow these steps:

   a. *Choose Image➪Resize➪Image Size.*

   b. *In the Image Size dialog box that appears, enter your desired width (or height).*

      Either Width or Height is fine because the image will maintain correct proportions by choosing either. A width between 6 and 8 inches works well. Click the Pixels drop-down menu next to Width to choose Inches as your unit of measure.

   c. *Type **144** in the Resolution box.* For screen viewing only 72 ppi is fine. However if you want your friends to print the image, 144 is a better choice. You can use either resolution.

   d. *Select the Resample Image check box and then click OK (see Figure 1-5).*

      The image is sized to a workable size for Facebook. In Chapter 2, you take a closer look at what these image-sizing options mean and how to choose the right settings for your prints or online images.

2. **Choose File➪Save As➪JPEG to save the file as a JPEG.**

   Note the location where you save the file on your hard drive. Chapter 2 also explains how to choose the right file format for your images. (JPEG is one of many file formats that Elements supports.)

3. **Click Share in the top-right corner of the workspace to open the Share panel and then choose Facebook from the drop-down list.**

   Elements enables you to upload to other services, like Twitter and Flickr, too. For details about the Share panel, flip to Chapter 15.