

Photoshop[®]
Elements 7
FOR
DUMMIES[®]

by **Barbara Obermeier and Ted Padova**



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Photoshop® Elements 7 For Dummies®

Published by
Wiley Publishing, Inc.
111 River Street
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

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Published by Wiley Publishing, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana

Published simultaneously in Canada

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2008937853

ISBN: 978-0-470-39700-8

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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Authors' Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank our excellent project editor, Kim Darosett, who kept us and this book on track; Bob Woerner, our great Executive Editor; Andy Cummings, Dummies Royalty; Dennis Cohen, technical editing wizard; Laura Miller, copy editor, who made what we wrote sound better; and all the dedicated production staff at Wiley. Additionally, we would like to thank Don Mason of Don Mason Photography, Bakersfield California for helping us out with some tone corrections and his expert advice on digital color correction.

Barbara Obermeier: A special thanks to Ted Padova, my coauthor, and friend, who always reminds me there is still a 1 in 53 million chance that we can win the lottery.

Ted Padova: My first choice always in coauthoring a book is to do the job with Barbara Obermeier. There's no one I'd rather work with, and I thank Barbara for initially putting together this project and asking me to join her.

Publisher's Acknowledgments

We're proud of this book; please send us your comments through our online registration form located at <http://dummies.custhelp.com>. For other comments, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

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Introduction

What was once a consumer-grade, low-level program for beginning image editors and a junior cousin to the powerful Adobe Photoshop program has evolved and matured to stand on its own merits now in version 7.0 for Windows and (as is often the case with the release of this program) later on the Macintosh. As of this writing, Elements is available on the Mac only in version 6. However, Adobe's history with Photoshop Elements is that the Mac version typically follows several months after the Windows release.

You won't find much comparison between Adobe Photoshop Elements and Adobe Photoshop in this book, nor will you see any suggestions that you should consider using Photoshop for one thing or another. We don't make suggestions simply because Photoshop Elements is a powerful tool that satisfies many needs of amateurs and professionals alike.

Why should you buy Elements (and, ultimately, this book)? The range of people who can benefit from using Elements is wide and includes a vast audience. From beginning image editors to intermediate users to more advanced amateurs and professionals, Elements has something for everyone. We'll even stick our necks out a little and suggest that many Photoshop users can benefit greatly by adding Elements to their software tool cabinets. Why? Because Elements offers some wonderful creation and sharing tools that Photoshop hasn't yet dreamed of supporting. For example, in Photoshop Elements 7, you can create postcards, greeting cards, and photo albums with just a few mouse clicks. You can place orders with online service centers that professionally print your photo creations. All these opportunities are available in Elements, and we cover these and many more creation ideas in Chapters 15 and 16.

To set your frame of mind to thinking in Photoshop Elements terms, don't think of the program as a scaled-down version of Adobe Photoshop; those days are gone. If you're a digital photographer and you shoot your pictures in JPEG or Camera Raw format, Elements has the tools for you to open, edit, and massage your pictures into professional images. If you worry about color profile embedding, forget it. Elements can handle the task for you, as we explain in Chapter 4, where we talk about Camera Raw, and in Chapter 14, where we talk about color profiling and printing. For the professional, Photoshop Elements has just about everything you need to create final images for color printing and commercial printing.

If you're a beginner or an intermediate user, you'll find some of the Photoshop Elements quick-fix operations a breeze to use to help you enhance your images, as we explain in Chapters 9 and 10. And, when it comes time for you to print some homemade greeting cards and photo albums — whether you're a beginner, an intermediate user, or a professional user — Elements provides

you with easy-to-follow steps to package your creations, as we cover in Chapters 15 and 16. In addition, the wonderful new sharing services available free to you on Photoshop.com are your gateway to keeping family, friends, and clients connected to your photos, as we explain in Chapter 16.

About This Book

This book is an effort to provide, in about 400 pages, as much of a comprehensive view of a wildly feature-rich program as we can. There's a lot to Elements, and we try to offer you as much as possible within our limited amount of space. We begged for more pages, but alas, our publisher wants to get this book in your hands in full color and with an attractive price tag. Therefore, even though we may skip over a few little things, all you need to know about using Photoshop Elements for designing images for print, sharing, Web hosting, versatile packaging, e-mailing, and more is covered in the pages ahead.

As we said, Photoshop Elements has something for just about everyone. Hence, we know that our audience is large and that not everyone will use every tool, command, or method described in this book. Therefore, we added a lot of cross-references in the text, in case you want to jump around. You can go to just about any chapter and start reading; and, if some concept needs more explanation, we point you in the right direction for getting some background when it's necessary.

Conventions Used in This Book

Throughout this book, we point you to menus where commands are accessed frequently. A couple of things to remember are the references for where to go when we detail steps in a procedure. For accessing a menu command, you may see a sentence like this one:

Choose File⇨Get Photos⇨From Files and Folders.

When you see commands like this one mentioned, we're asking you to click the File menu to open the drop-down menu, click the menu command labeled Get Photos, and then choose the command From Files and Folders from the submenu that appears.

Another convention we use refers to context menus. A *context menu* jumps up at your cursor position and shows you a menu similar to the menu you select at the top of the Elements workspace. To open a context menu, right-click the mouse (Shift-click on the Mac).

A third item relates to using keystrokes on your keyboard. When we mention that some keys need to be pressed on your keyboard, the text is described like this:

Press Alt+Shift+Ctrl+S

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

How This Book Is Organized

This book is divided into logical parts where related features are nested together in chapters within six different parts of the book.

Part I: Getting Started

If you just bought a digital camera and you're new to image editing in a program like Photoshop Elements, you're probably tempted to jump into fixing and editing your pictures. The essentials usually aren't the most exciting part of any program or book. That's true with this book, too: The more mundane issues related to understanding some basics are assembled in the first three chapters. Although some bits of information aren't as exciting as in many other chapters, you must understand them before you start editing images. Be sure to review the first three chapters before you dive into the other chapters.

In Part I, we talk about the tools, menus, commands, preferences, workspaces, and features that help you move around easily in the program. The more you pick up in the preliminary chapters, the more easily you can adapt to the Elements way of working.

Part II: Getting Organized

In Part II, we talk about getting photos in Elements, organizing your files, searching for files, and grouping your photos, and we give you much more information related to the Photoshop Elements Organizer. The *Organizer* is your central workplace, and knowing a great deal about using the Organizer window helps you move around much faster in the program.

Part III: Selecting and Correcting Photos

Part III relates to creating and manipulating selections. There's a lot to making selections in photos, but after you figure it out (by reading Chapter 7), you

can cut out a figure in a picture and drop it into another picture, drop different backgrounds into pictures, or isolate an area that needs some brightness and contrast adjustment. In Chapter 8, we talk about layers and how to create and manage them in Elements. In many other chapters, we refer you to Chapter 8 because you need to work with layers for many other tasks you do in Elements.

In Chapter 9, we talk about fixing image flaws and problems. That picture you took with your digital camera may be underexposed or overexposed, or it may need some work to remove dust and scratches. Maybe it needs a little sharpening, or some other imperfection requires editing. All the know-hows and how-tos are in this chapter.

In Chapter 10, we cover how to correct color problems, brightness, and contrast. We show you ways to quickly fix photos, as well as some methods for custom image corrections.

Part IV: Exploring Your Inner Artist

This part is designed to bring out the artist in you. Considering the easy application of Elements filter effects, you can turn a photo image into a drawing or apply a huge number of different effects to change the look of your image.

In Chapter 12, we talk about drawing and painting so that you can let your artistic expression run wild. We follow up in Chapter 13 by talking about adding text to photos so that you can create your own layouts, posters, cards, and more.

Part V: Printing, Creating, and Sharing

One critical chapter in this book is Chapter 14, in which we talk about printing your pictures. If your prints don't look the way they do on your monitor, you need to read and reread this chapter.

If screen viewing is of interest to you, we cover a number of different options for viewing your pictures onscreen in Chapter 15. For slide shows, Web-hosted images, animated images, photo viewing on your TV, and even creating movie files, this chapter shows you the many ways you can view your Elements images onscreen.

We wrap up this part with Chapter 16, in which we describe how to make creations and share files by using the new Photoshop.com service provided by Adobe Systems. You have a number of different options for making creations to share or print.

Part VI: The Part of Tens

The last part of the book contains the Part of Tens chapters. We offer ten tips for composing better images and give you ten more project ideas to try with Elements.

Icons Used in This Book

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



This icon informs you that the item discussed is a new feature in Photoshop Elements 7.



A Tip tells you about an alternative method for a procedure, by giving you a shortcut, a workaround, or some other type of helpful information related to working on tasks in the section being discussed.



Pay particular attention when you see the Warning icon. This icon indicates possible side-effects 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.



Elements is a computer program, after all. No matter how hard we try to simplify our explanation of features, we can't entirely avoid the technical information. If we think that a topic is complex, 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.

Where to Go from Here

As we say earlier in the Introduction, the first part of this book serves as a foundation for all the other chapters. Try to spend a little time reading through the three chapters in Part I. After that, feel free to jump around and pay special attention to the cross-referenced chapters, in case you get stuck on a concept.

When you need a little extra help, refer to Chapter 1, where we talk about using the online help documents available in Elements.

If you have some questions, comments, suggestions, or complaints, go to

<http://support.wiley.com>

We hope you have much success and enjoyment in using Adobe Photoshop Elements 7, 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



In this part . . .

Here you have it: a computer book specifically designed to help you get the most out of a computer software program — and not just any software program, but a powerful one with many complicated features. You probably want to jump in and perform some spiffy editing operations to get that prize photo looking the best you can. Inasmuch as we try to accommodate you in setting forth a how-to book in a nonlinear fashion, where you can freely move around and read about the techniques you want to use without having to read each chapter in order, you have to understand a few basics for editing your photos.

In this first part of the book, we talk about some essentials to help you fully understand all the parts ahead. We first talk about your Photoshop Elements working environment and describe the many tools and features you can use for all your Elements sessions. We also cover the very important task of getting color set for optimum viewing on your computer monitor and describe some essentials you need to know about color as it relates to photo images. Part I contains some important information that you should plan to carefully review and understand before going too far into all the Elements features. Don't pass up this part. Turn the page and start getting acquainted with the Adobe Photoshop Elements basics.



Getting to Know the Work Area

In This Chapter

- ▶ Opening Photoshop Elements
- ▶ Understanding the Elements workspace
- ▶ Changing workspace views
- ▶ Working with the Project Bin
- ▶ Using the Undo History panel
- ▶ Accessing Help documents
- ▶ Using keyboard shortcuts

When you first launch Photoshop Elements, you arrive at a Welcome screen. The Welcome screen offers you several choices for opening up some different editing modes, special Elements tasks that you can perform, and an opportunity to sign up for an Adobe Web-hosted service.

When it comes to editing a photograph, you find quite a collection of tools, panels, buttons, and options in the Photoshop Elements Edit mode. Just a quick glance at the Elements workspace when you enter Full Edit mode shows you some of the power that Elements offers with just a click of your mouse. With all the possibilities, navigating the Elements workspaces and engaging in an editing session can be intimidating. To ease your introduction to the many options for editing your pictures, we break them down for you in this chapter.

Elements has several work areas, and we start off by introducing you to the Welcome screen. Then, we move on to the mode you'll likely use frequently — Full Edit mode. In this mode, you can be creative with all the tools and features Photoshop Elements is known for, such as filters, drawing tools, layers, and more. We then introduce other work areas and tools you may not be as familiar with — Quick Edit mode for making common corrections to photos; Creation mode for collecting your



photos into creations, such as calendars; and the Project Bin for navigating among all your open images.

Before you start working in Elements, you may find it helpful to know how to undo edits so that you can start over easily and find additional sources of help within Elements. We also explain one of the handiest ways to select tools and enter common commands: keyboard shortcuts.

Elements 7 also has the *Organizer*, a powerful tool for acquiring your images and keeping them organized. The Organizer includes features that help you view and search for images, too. We introduce the Organizer in Part II.

Launching Photoshop Elements 7

A great place to start in Elements is a central navigation area where you can choose what mode and activity you want to engage in. Well, that's exactly what Adobe provides you when you open Photoshop Elements. It's like the command center on the Starship Enterprise, except you won't find Spock asking the computer any questions. The Welcome screen is easy to navigate and intuitive, as you can see in Figure 1-1.

Here's what you find in the Welcome screen:

✔ **Photoshop.com Membership:** For many generations of Photoshop Elements, Adobe has depended on third-party services for sharing files and placing orders for prints.

You haven't lost any of these services, but

Adobe has brought the sharing business

under the fold of its own online servers. You get a whopping 2 gigabytes of hard-disk space to upload files and share them with friends. The best thing about the Photoshop.com service is that it's free! Because this feature is closely related to sharing files, we include all the descriptions for using the service in Chapter 16. If you just can't wait to get through all the things we talk about related to other features in Elements, jump to Chapter 16 and have a look at this new Photoshop Elements service.

✔ **Organize:** Click the Organize button to open the Organizer, where you can manage your collections of pictures stored on your hard drive. We cover using the Organizer and so many of its great features in Part II.

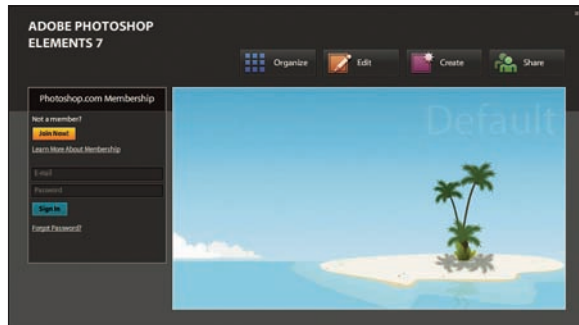


Figure 1-1: The Photoshop Elements Welcome screen appears when you launch Elements.

- ✔ **Edit:** If you need to edit a photo, click the Edit button to access options for using either the Quick Fix mode to do some quick editing tasks or Full Edit mode, in which you can do the extraordinary editing jobs.
- ✔ **Create:** Click the Create button to move into the Create mode. In this mode, you can do some fancy things that Elements provides you, such as creating greeting cards, photo books, and calendars.
- ✔ **Share:** The Share workspace is all about sharing your photos. It's all well and good to admire your own creations, but getting kudos from others can make you feel great. The Share workspace provides you options for creating an online album, e-mailing photos, printing your pictures, placing print orders, and copying photos to CD-ROMs and DVDs. We cover all you want to know about sharing your pictures in Chapter 16.

If you know what you want to do in Elements, go ahead and click the appropriate button. But if you enter one mode and then decide you want to do something in another mode, Elements provides you the freedom to easily change modes from within the different workspaces.

Just one more thing before we leave the Welcome screen. You can always return to the Welcome screen after you enter any editing mode. At the top of the Elements window in all modes, a house icon appears, as shown in Figure 1-2. Click this icon to open the Welcome screen again.

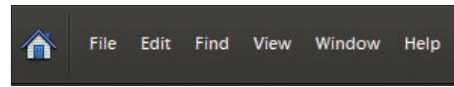


Figure 1-2: Click the house icon in the menu bar in any editing mode to reopen the Welcome screen.

Getting Around in Full Edit Mode

Full Edit mode offers bundles of tools that you can use to edit your images, from correction tools for fixing color and clarity to filters, layers, and more for changing existing photos or creating entirely original images from scratch. But all these tools also make Full Edit mode complex.

Figure 1-3 shows Elements in Full Edit mode, highlighting all the tools and features we discuss in the following sections.

Jumping to Full Edit mode

You can move into Full Edit mode in a couple of ways:

- ✔ **From the initial Welcome screen:** Click Edit and open a photo. Your Elements window appears in Full Edit mode, as shown in Figure 1-3.
- ✔ **From the Organizer:** Click a photo and click Fix. Click Full Edit to open the selected file in Full Edit mode.

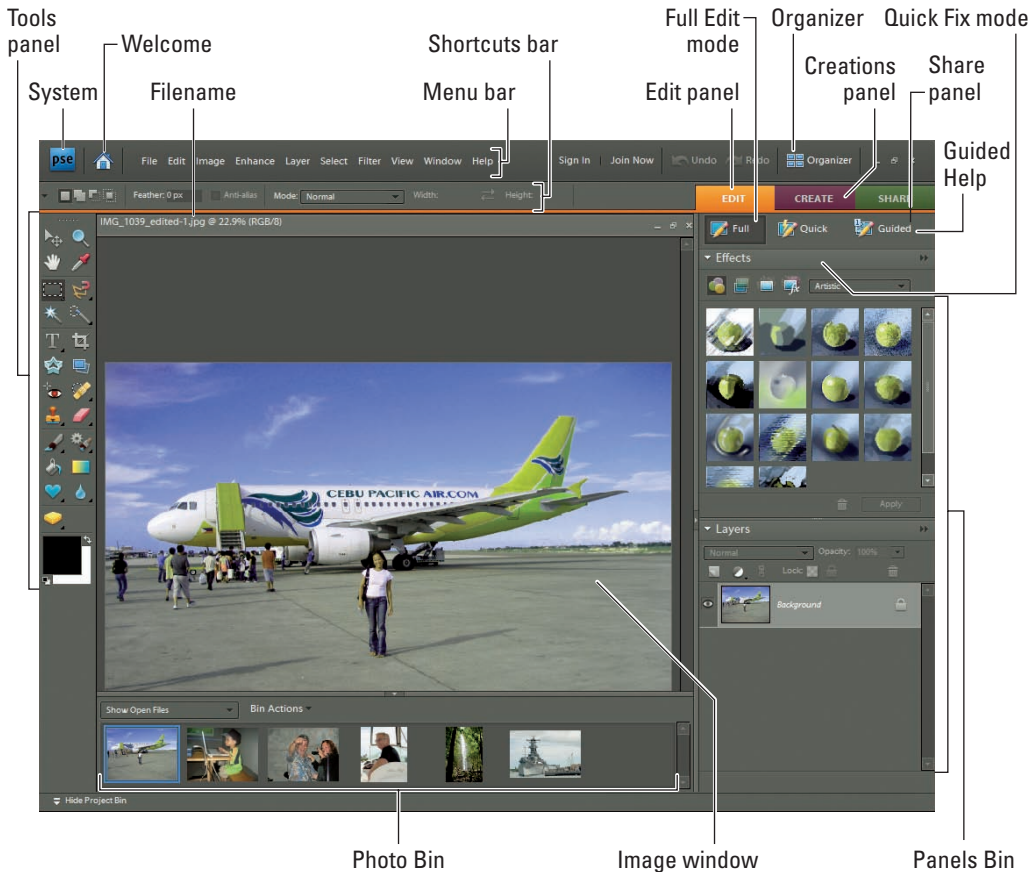


Figure 1-3: The Photoshop Elements workspace appears when you open a file in Full Edit mode.



You can also open a context menu (right-click your mouse button to make this menu appear) on a photo in the Organizer and select Full Edit from that menu to open the selected file in Full Edit mode.

Examining the image window

Not surprisingly, the image window's tools and features are most useful when an image is open in the window. To get an image into the image window (as shown in Figure 1-3), follow these steps:

1. Choose File⇨Open.

The standard Open dialog box appears. It works like any ordinary Open dialog box you find in other applications.

2. Move around your hard drive by using methods you know to open folders, and then select a picture.

If you haven't yet downloaded digital camera images or acquired scanned photos and want an image to experiment with, you can use an image found in your My Pictures folder that was installed with Windows.

Elements installs some nice sample images with the application installation. Look in the Photoshop Elements 7\Tutorial folder to find some photos to play with.



3. After selecting a picture, click Open.

The photo opens in a new image window in Elements.



You can open as many image windows in Elements as your computer memory can handle. When each new file is opened, a thumbnail image is added to the Project Bin at the bottom of the screen (see Figure 1-3), and the image windows are stacked, with the current active image in the topmost window. To bring another open file to the foreground and make it active, click the respective thumbnail in the Project Bin.

Here's a quick look at important items in the image window, as shown in Figure 1-4:

- ✓ **Scroll bars:** Become active when you zoom in on an image. You can click the scroll arrows, move the scroll bar, or grab the Hand tool in the Tools panel and then drag within the window to move the image.
- ✓ **Magnification box:** Shows you at a glance how much you have zoomed in or out.
- ✓ **Information box:** Shows you a readout for a particular tidbit of information. You can choose what information you want to see in this area by selecting one of the options from the pop-up menu, which we discuss in more detail later in this section.

When you're working on an image in Elements, you always want to know the physical image size, the image resolution, and the color mode. (These terms are explained in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4.) Regardless of which menu option you select



Photo courtesy Corbis Digital Stock

Figure 1-4: The image window displays an open file within the Elements workspace.

from the status bar, you can get a quick glimpse at these essential stats by clicking the Information box, which displays a pop-up menu like the one shown in Figure 1-5.

- ✔ **Size box:** Enables you to resize the window. Move the cursor to the box, and a diagonal line with two opposing arrows appears. When the cursor changes, drag in or out to size the window smaller or larger, respectively.

You can also resize the window by dragging any of the corners in or out.

- ✔ **Minimize button:** The – button in the upper-right corner of the image window. Click this button to hide the window from view. The window’s still open; you just click the image in the Project Bin to return the image to the previous size in the window.
- ✔ **Maximize button:** The button with the box-shaped icon. If you click this button, the Title bar shown at the top of the window disappears and provides you with a little more room for viewing images in the window.
- ✔ **Close button:** Shaped like an X. Click this button to close the active image window and keep Elements open. Alternatively, you can use the keyboard shortcut `Ctrl/⌘+W` or choose `File⇒Close` to close the active window.

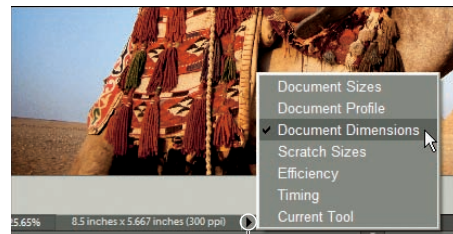


Figure 1-5: Click the readout on the status bar, and a pop-up menu shows you important information about your file.

After you’re familiar with the overall image window, we want to introduce you to the Information box’s pop-up menu, which enables you to choose the type of information you want to view in the Information box. Click the right-pointing arrow to open the menu, as shown in Figure 1-6.

Here’s the lowdown of the options you find on the pop-up menu:

- ✔ **Document Sizes:** Shows you the saved file size.
- ✔ **Document Profile:** Shows you the color profile used with the file.
- ✔ **Document Dimensions:** As shown in Figure 1-6, shows you the physical size in your default unit of measure, such as inches.



Click to open pop-up menu

Figure 1-6: From the pop-up menu on the status bar, select commands that provide information about your file.