

Editing Digital Photos with Photoshop Elements 6

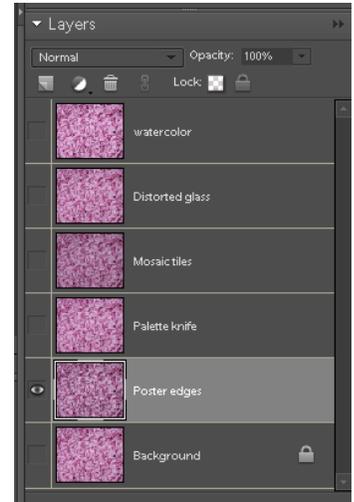
Photoshop Elements is the small, much less expensive, version of Adobe Photoshop. Version 6 is the latest, and much preferred, version. \$54.99, after rebate and free shipping, at www.amazon.com. Must be purchased by 10/31/08. See page three for links to reviews.

Layers

Using layers is one way of trying effects and being able to easily compare the results with the original photo, and without changing the original photo.

Layers can also be used for making a collage.

I have also used layers for putting people into a photo.

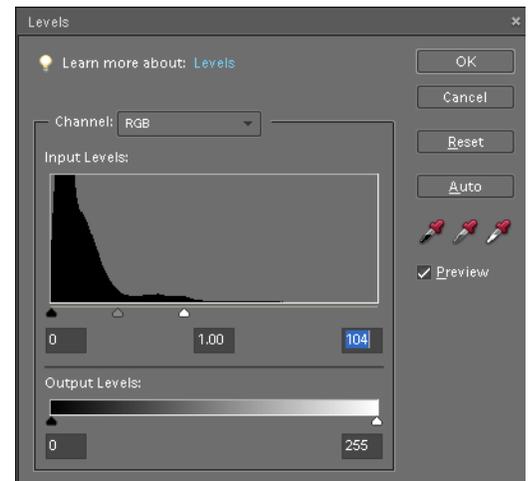
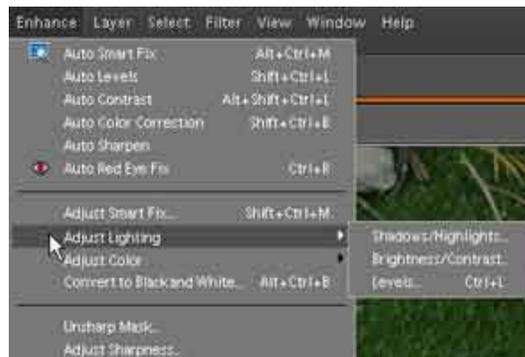


Levels

Ctrl L to open

Using “levels” is an alternate, and good way of changing brightness and contrast to achieve the desired appearance.

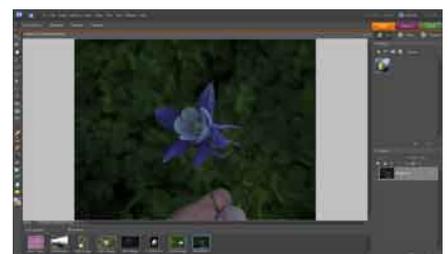
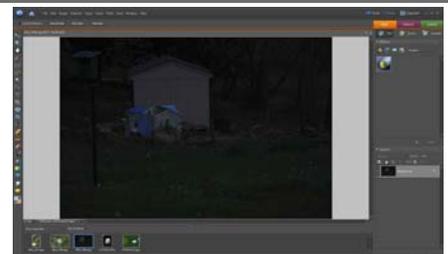
Brightness changes the entire photo, whereas “levels” can change only the dark or light portions of the photo.



I use “levels” to change a large percentage of my photos, for:

1. Improving appearance.
2. Darkening the background so the main item stands out.
3. Saving photos that are far too dark.

Using “levels” changes the distribution of the data in a digital photo, so the data is used much more effectively, thus improving the appearance.



Editing Digital Photos with Photoshop Elements 6

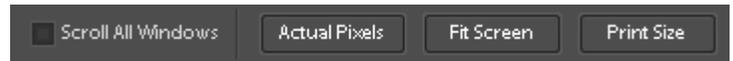
Crop “c”



Cropping can use a standard aspect ratio, or you can use your custom dimensions. Clicking the left and right arrows switches the cropping between landscape mode and portrait mode.



Hand “h”



The “hand” tool is used to show three different sizes of the photo (see the graphic above), and to move the viewed portion of the photo if the photo is too large to display on the computer monitor.

After cropping, using the “hand” tool to fit the photo to the screen is a good way of viewing the photo at the maximum size of the Photoshop Elements window.

Straighten

“p” for aligning horizontally
“p”, then ctrl, for aligning vertically



Photos are often taken with the horizon slightly tilted, so using “p” is a really quick way of straightening the photo.

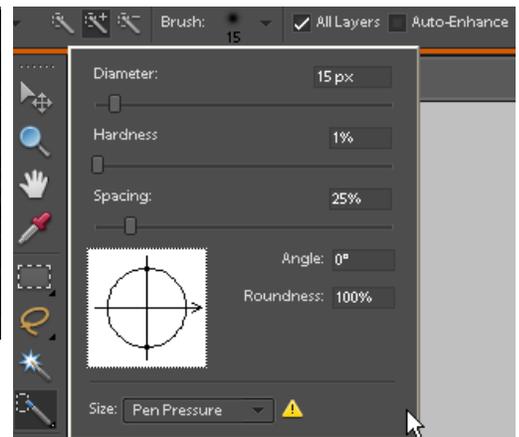


Quick selection tool

“A” to activate
“Alt” key to subtract.



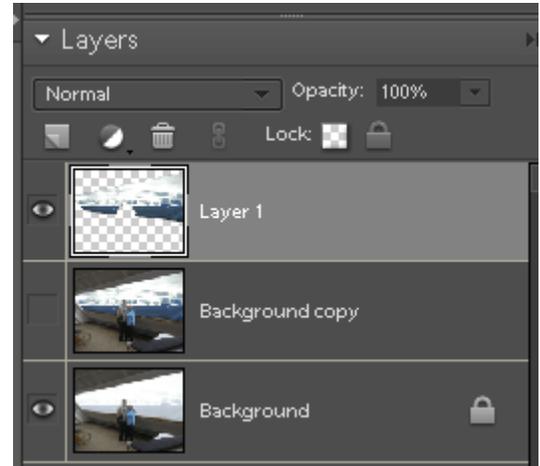
The Quick Selection tool is a very fast way of selection area of similar brightness or color, so that area can be edited, such as using “levels”, or painting the area with a color. This is a fast way of saving bad photos when one section of the photo is too dark or too light.



Editing Digital Photos with Photoshop Elements 6

Layer via copy (ctrl j)

When using the “Quick Selection tool”, you may want to save that selection as a separate layer. The edited section/layer will then be used to replace the section that is too dark or too light.



Recommended book: “Photoshop Elements 6: The Missing Manual”; \$26.39 with free shipping, when purchased on www.amazon.com.

Handy keyboard shortcuts:

ctrl L: levels

c: crop

h: hand

Straighten

“p” for aligning horizontally

“p”, then ctrl, for aligning vertically

ctrl-shift-i: invert the selected area

ctrl j: Layer via copy

Quick selection tool

“A” to activate

“Alt” key to subtract.

Reviews of Photoshop Elements 6:

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2190204,00.asp>

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,138590/article.html>

<http://www.digitalcamerareview.com/default.asp?newsID=3213>

<http://www.dpreview.com/news/0709/07092401pse6.asp>

<http://www.macworld.com/article/132704/2008/03/photoshopelements6.html>

<http://www.pophoto.com/photosoftware/4773/software-review-adobe-photoshop-elements-6.html>