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PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS ESSENTIALS

Putting the Mechanics on Autopilot So You Can Get On with Being Creative



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AISE YOUR HAND if you've got a digital camera. Right, just about everyone has one these days. Now, raise your hand if you have figured out how to organize, sort, and manage all of the 1,256,280 images you have clogging up your computer. Ah yes, that's where it gets trickier. With digital cameras, you don't have to worry about wasting film or the cost of developing it, so you're free to be an enthusiastic photographer. And then you're left with all those photos. If that sounds familiar, this chapter should be a big help to you.

In the following pages, we cover everything you need to know to sort your images so that you can get your hands on the one you want, when you want it. Of course, there's much more to Adobe Photoshop Elements than organizing your photos. This first chapter gives you a valuable guided tour through the workspaces of Photoshop Elements 5.0 and the basic workflows that will help you manage and edit images efficiently. We know that becoming familiar with an application as complex as Photoshop Elements is not all beer and skittles, and we're here to make the process easier.

Your New Digital Landscape

Photoshop Elements includes four primary workspaces: the Organizer, Quick Fix, the Photo Editor, and the Creation Wizard. Each is designed to help you perform specific tasks, and each has its own set of tools. We'll show you how each can help you work with your photos.

We'll also use this chapter to show you the basic skills you'll rely on as you work in Photoshop Elements. You'll learn how to make selections, create and manipulate layers, save your images,



and set up color management. Our goal is to help you feel comfortable with the basics so that you're confident and ready to dive in when we introduce cool techniques later in the book.

Viva La Digital Revolution

The digital camera revolution has brought with it a whole new set of file formats and software. Therefore, we need to rethink traditional photography workflows. For example, many digital cameras let you capture the raw data in a proprietary format, giving you much greater flexibility in editing your image. We cover in detail some of the issues and the possibilities that digital photographers and designers face when you work with camera raw formats. We also help you navigate the tools for handling color in a digital environment. Digital photography is a brave new world. As Jack Davis says, film is just something you find on your teeth. The tips for organizing, managing, and editing your prized digital photos should help you find the prospect of dealing with a thousand images from a single outing less daunting.

Tooling Up

Photoshop Elements includes so many digital gadgets, you may well drool with excitement. Just try not to drool on the keyboard. Take the time to master the information in this first chapter, and you'll be ready to tackle all the projects in the following chapters—and just about any other creative challenge you can think up. The great big world of digital imaging will soon be yours.



The Organizer

Use the Organizer, which includes both the Photo Browser and the Date View workspaces, to sort, search for, tag, and organize your files. Photo Browser displays all the images in a folder or catalog; View By Date displays images in a calendar format.

<page-header><image><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header>

Opening the Organizer

Click View And Organize Photos in the Welcome screen or Photo Browser in the Editor to open the Photo Browser workspace. Click Date View in the Editor to open the Date View workspace.



Image: Create Provide P

Importing Images

Click the camera icon **A**, and choose an import method. Most of us import photos directly from a camera or card reader connected to the computer's USB port. But you can also scan traditional photos or copy images from a CD, other portable storage device, or folders on your hard drive. You can import photos from an online sharing service, such as a library of stock photography. You can even download photos from your cell phone, if it includes a camera.



INSIGHT

Photos over Time. To view images by date, click the Date View button. Click Day, Month, or Year at the bottom of the window: Day displays images taken on a particular day; scroll through the dates at the top of the window. Month displays thumbnails of the images on the calendar page. Year highlights the dates that photos were taken, but doesn't display thumbnails of those images.



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4 Stars	4
3 Stars	3
👷 2 Stars	2
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Viewing Images

Photoshop Elements displays thumbnails of your images. Use the scroll bar on the right side of the window to scroll through them A. To change the size of the thumbnails, move the slider at the bottom of the screen. To display the smallest thumbnails possible, click the icon to the left of the slider **B**; to display one image at a time, click the icon to the right of the slider C.

At the top of the window, the timeline shows when the photographs were taken **D**. The timeline can come in handy for quickly assessing the age of the images. However, if you don't need the timeline, hide it to free up screen real estate by choosing View > Timeline (Ctrl+L).



Collections

A collection is a set of images that are related in some way, such as images of a certain place or subject, photos taken at a specific time, or images that you plan to use for a particular project. You can create as many collections as you like, and a photo may be included in multiple collections. To create a collection, choose New > Collections in the Collections palette. To add an image to the collection, select it in the Organizer, and then drag the collection onto it—or drag the image onto the collection. To view the photos in a collection, click the box next to its name in the Collections palette; a binoculars icon appears next to the collection that is currently displayed.

A small number appears on each thumbnail, indicating the order of the images in a collection. To change the order, drag a thumbnail into its new position. The numbers automatically change.

Tagging Images

You can further sort images by applying tags to them. Photoshop Elements includes tags for one-star to five-star ratings, as well as tags for labeling family, friends, places, and events. To create a custom tag, choose New > New Tag in the Tags palette, assign it to a category, and name the tag.

To apply a tag to a photo, drag the tag onto the photo, or drag the photo onto the tag. The star ratings also have keyboard shortcuts; select a photo and press 1 to apply one star. 2 to apply two stars, and so on.