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# PETERSEN'S PHOTO graphic



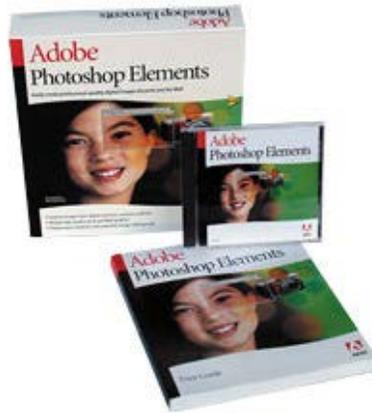
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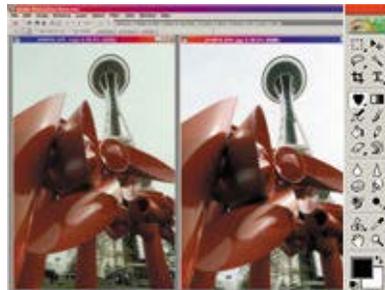
### Adobe Photoshop Elements

Text and Photos by Jack and Sue Drafafl, January, 2002



*Powerful and versatile image-editing and more, at a consumer-level price*

For years, professional photographers have enjoyed the endless editing capabilities of Adobe Photoshop. Due to the program's sophistication, it can be a bit overwhelming to new and even advanced photographers just trying to edit their digital camera images. Adobe's first solution was a lite version of Adobe Photoshop with some disabled functions, but it still had the look and feel of a professional program. So, Adobe decided to take a new approach with Adobe Elements. The program has the same power of Adobe Photoshop, but with a friendlier interface.



Auto Levels automatically optimizes color, contrast and brightness. The Toolbox is simpler than Photoshop's, and displays the basic image-editing tools in Elements. To select a tool, just click on it.



The Flash Fill feature in Photoshop Elements lightens mid-tones much the way using fill-flash when taking a picture does. A comparison display lets you view before-and-after versions side-by-side for easy comparison.

The biggest difference in the two programs is the tab pulldown menu at the top of the Elements screen. Normally, the various palettes in Photoshop are found floating on the main edit screen and you can hide or move them as you edit your image. In Elements, these palettes are grouped at the top of the editing screen in folder tabs. This keeps your editing screen cleaner, but still allows fast access to the various editing functions. Let's take a look at the various palettes features.

Starting from left to right we find the File Browser, which is a great little tool for finding pictures. When you select the directory for your pictures, the images will all appear in thumbnail form on your screen. Simply select the one you want to edit and drag it onto your editing screen. When you are finished, save it out and the changes are reflected as a new thumbnail in the File Browser.

The Recipes tab is a digital cookbook

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The Lens Flare feature instantly adds a flare effect to any image.

that gives you step-by-step instructions on making basic photo corrections. If you have a complicated procedure and want to repeat it later, you can add your own recipes to the list.

When the Elements program first starts, it will collect all the filters and effects and then categorize them under the Filters or Effects tabs. It shows the various locations for each function and creates a large thumbnail sample display. It is then simple to select the filter or effect you desire, and drag it onto the image you are editing.

The Layer Styles tab groups the different types of styles into bevels, shadows, glows, complex, and basic effects. Select the style you want and drag it onto your image.

The Swatches tab gives you color choices for fill applications. To be sure you select the right color, you can double-click on a color and it will show you the color's name. Once you select a color from the tool box, a second color palette appears to help you fine-tune your color selection, providing you the option of millions of color variations.

The History tab keeps track of all the editing you do to a specific photo. If you want to see what you have done, or eliminate part of your editing, you can use the History menu. It's a little like the step backward or forward functions except that you don't have to do things in sequence.

The Navigator is a quick and easy way to zoom in on a specific part of an image. You first use the zoom slider to get the proper magnification on a thumbnail image. Then use the hand to move the zoom box to the desired part of the photo and the final zoomed effect will be displayed on the main image.

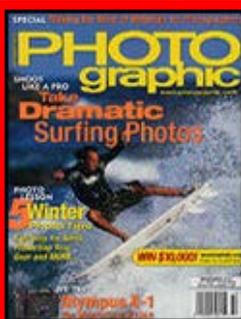
The Info tab gives you direct color readout information when you move the cursor or eyedropper around the image. The information is displayed in RGB and CMYK and provides your cursor's exact x,y coordinates.

The Layers tab provides a thumbnail display of each layer in your image.

You then have full editing access to a specific layer so you can apply a desired style. It is then a simple task to drag the same style to all other layers rather than one at a time.

Simply put, the Hint tab is a tutorial on the fly. It gives you answers to problems you may encounter as you edit an image. For example, if you select the Dodge tool from the toolbox and then the Hint key, it will tell you what the tool does and how it works.

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Photomerge allows you to combine a series of shots of a scene into a long, thin panoramic image, automatically aligning all the pieces for you.



The Underpainting Artistic Filter makes it easy to turn a photo (top) into a painting-like image (bottom).

The Elements toolbox itself is a slightly different configuration, but features most of Photoshop's basic tools. Some of the more-advanced editing tools have been removed to make room for new tools like the Red Eye tool. When you select a specific color, this tool swaps the color to replace the red eye. It allows various levels of tolerance and brush dynamics, so you can control the intensity of the change.

We mentioned earlier that the friendly interface with its hidden power is the crux of the Adobe Elements program. They make it easy to correct common photo problems. Flash Fill will lighten the mid-tones and Adjust Backlighting will darken the images to correct for overexposure caused by the camera flash. Auto Straighten Crop helps you fix an image that has been scanned crooked. Variations provides a simple side-by-side comparison of color-correction possibilities so you can see the changes you make immediately.

If you want to add text to your photo, you can go to the toolbox and select the Text tool. Click your cursor at the position where you want the text and up pops a text menu at the top of the screen. You can adjust the font style, size, justification and color. Type the text, and then add special effects from the styles menu. Adobe Elements makes it really easy.

You can also merge several photos into one image using the new function called Photomerge. When you open this function, it will ask you to specify your panorama sections so they can be merged to form a panorama. In order for the function to work smoothly, you need to provide images that contain data overlap of about 30-40%. The program can automatically align all the pieces into one panorama, or you can manually drop each segment close to the alignment spot and Elements will

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then fine-tune the alignment to produce a panoramic image.

Adobe Elements also makes it easy to prepare your images for the Web, E-mail and print output. The Save for Web command allows you to optimize graphics and even produce your own Web pages with the Web Photo Gallery. With their Picture Package you can print multiple copies of a photo on a single sheet of paper or even create a contact sheet and vary the size of the images.

Adobe Elements works with Windows 98/Windows98 Second Edition/Windows ME/Windows 2000/Windows NT 4.0 or Macintosh OS 8.6, 9.0, 9.0.4 and 9.1. For further information regarding Elements, check out Adobe's Web site at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com).

We have been using Photoshop for years, and were quite surprised at the quality of Adobe Elements. We found it faster than Photoshop and easy to use. The friendly menus and powerful potential of Adobe editing make Elements a perfect companion for the new digital photographer. Best of you can get all this for under a hundred bucks!