

The Digital Corner

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PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS VER. 7 --- EXAMPLE WORKFLOW FOR EDITING IMAGES

INTENDED AUDIENCE OF ARTICLE

This article is written for someone who is an experienced user of Adobe Photoshop Elements.

INTRODUCTION

Editing images using Photoshop Elements are covered in great detail in the club's workshops. Therefore, we will only cover this topic from a perspective of developing a *workflow*. What is *workflow*? *Workflow* is the sequence of tools you use to improve the appearance of your photo. **There is no one correct workflow!** Rochelle's workflow is quite different from my workflow. I believe we both produce good quality images. This article is intended to present a workflow to help you to develop your own personal workflow. Only accept what is presented here that you are comfortable with; reject what you are not comfortable with; add what you feel better fits your way of doing things!

Using the tools presented in this article will take care of at least 90% of your total image adjustments. They will be presented in the order that they should be used.

FOCAL POINT

What is the focal point, primary subject, of your image? In other words, why did you take this photo? This must be determined before making any enhancements to your image.

Entire Image

- **Focal point:** Determine focal point of image
- **Crop** image to remove distracting elements from its focal point
 - Rectangle Marquee tool --- Select the area of the image that you want to keep
 - **Command:** Image → Crop
 - **Command:** Select → Deselect
- **Resize** the image to 240 pixels per inch without re-sampling
 - **Command:** Image → Resize → Image Size
 - **Resolution** 240
 - **Resample Image** Box does **not** have a check mark
 - **Click** OK
- **Cleanup** image to remove scratches, dust, or other distracting elements (at 100% magnification)
- **Color correct** if image has an undesired color cast
 - **Command:** Layer → New Adjustment Layer → Levels
 - Click **OK**
 - Left Click Midtone eyedropper
 - Left click a midtone area in the image
 - Click **OK**
 - Repeat with black and white eyedroppers
- **Contrast:** Increase contrast from +5 to +15
 - **Command:** Layer → New Adjustment Layer → Brightness/Contrast
 - Click **OK**
 - Move *Contrast* slider to desired contrast level
 - Click **OK**
- **Tonality:** Make adjustments to tonality using Levels tool
 - **Command:** Layer → New Adjustment Layer → Levels
 - Click **OK**
 - **Shadows** Move Shadows slider to beginning of histogram
 - **Highlights** Move Highlights slider to beginning of histogram
 - **Midtones** Move Midtone slider to adjust midtones of image to desired tonality
 - **Click** OK
- **Saturation:** Increase as needed (about +5 to +20); do **not** over saturate! Most of the time a better saturation can be obtained by not adjusting the **Master** in the Edit box; increase saturation for the predominate color in an image; for example, red in red rock country.
 - **Command:** Layer → New Adjustment Layer → Hue/Saturation
 - Click **OK**
 - Move *Saturation* slider to desired saturation level
 - Click **OK**

Selections Inside Image

For various selections inside the image, perform the following for each selection as needed:

- **Blocked up shadows:** lighten shadows to show detail using Levels tool
- **Burned out highlights:** darken highlights to show detail using Levels tool
- **Focal point:** subtly increase saturation
- **Outer edges:** to keep the eyes from leaving the image
 - Select the inside of the image
 - Using Rectangle marquee tool draw a rectangle within the image
 - Feather at 150 pixels
 - **Command:** Select → Feather
 - Type value 150 in box
 - Click **OK**
 - Select the outer edges
 - **Command:** Select → Inverse
 - Use Levels tool to darken midtones with a value of 0.90 to 0.85
 - **Command:** Layer → New Adjustment Layer → Levels
 - Click **OK**
 - Move Midtone slider to right to a value of 0.90 to 0.85
 - Click **OK**

Save Image (Sized As Captured)

Command: File → Save As

Type name of file

Click **OK**

Resize Image to Print Size

Save the image with a new filename where the filename denotes the print size. Use *incremental resizing* technique. Increase image in steps by 10%. When image is the size desired sharpen image for printing.

To increase the image size by 10% without changing the resolution:

- **Command:** Image → Resize → Image Size
- Make sure a check is in box for *Resample Image*
- Make sure *Bicubic Smoother* is the resampling technique to be used
- Change drop down list showing *inches* to *percent* for Width and Height
- Type 110 in box for Width
- Click **OK**

Sharpening Image

Before sharpening, you will have to flatten all layers. Layer → Flatten Image

Command:

Enhance → Unsharp Mask

Settings to Use

Amount

Radius

Threshold

Typical Sharpening for Print

100

1.5

9

Command for Elements 6:

Filter → Sharpen → Unsharp Mask

File Type When Saving

Consider saving edited images in either native Photoshop format or TIFF format. Each time you save in JPEG, the compression algorithm discards some of the data. For small to medium size prints you may not see any adverse results. After **several** editing sessions, large prints may show the effects of compression, referred to as JPG blocking compression artifacts.