

Chapter 1

Introducing the Two Faces of Photoshop

In This Chapter

- ▶ Introducing the dual world of Photoshop
- ▶ Discovering the difference between painting and image editing
- ▶ Adjusting photographs
- ▶ What's new in Photoshop cs
- ▶ Finding images to edit

Adobe Photoshop is arguably the most comprehensive and popular photo editor around. In fact, I don't know a single computer artist who doesn't use Photoshop on an almost daily basis, regardless of what other programs he or she may use.

I assume that you've at least seen, if not used, Photoshop, and that you have a vague idea of what it's all about. But just so that we're all clear on the subject, the primary purpose of Photoshop is to make changes to digital photographic images. (For some clever ideas on acquiring such images, see the sidebar "Finding images to abuse," later in this chapter.)

If you've used Photoshop for only a week or so, you may have mistaken it for a fairly straightforward package. Certainly, on the surface of the program, Photoshop comes off as rather friendly. But lurking a few fathoms deep is another, darker program, one that is distinctly unfriendly for the uninitiated, but wildly capable for the stout of heart. My analyst would no doubt declare Photoshop a classic case of a split personality. In short, Photoshop has a Dr. Jekyll-and-Mr. Hyde thing going on.

This chapter explores both sides of the Photoshop brain. It also introduces you to the personality changes found in the latest incarnation of the program, Photoshop cs. Finally, I get you started on the road to image-editing bliss by explaining where to find images to edit in the first place.

10 Part I: Getting the Basics Down

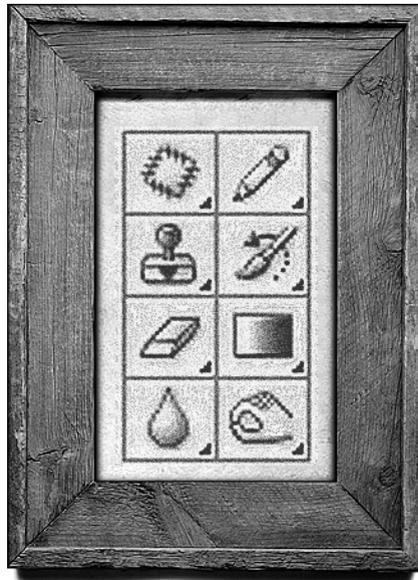
The Two Functions of Photoshop

Generally speaking, the two halves of Photoshop serve different purposes. The straightforward Jekyll tools mostly concentrate on *painting*, and the more complex Hyde capabilities are devoted to *image editing*. Therefore, to tackle this great program, you may find it helpful to understand the difference between the two terms.

Drawing and painting without the mess

To discover the benevolent Dr. Jekyll half of Photoshop, you need look no farther than the standard painting and editing tools. Shown in Figure 1-1, these tools are so simple, they're practically pastoral. The Eraser tool erases, the Pencil tool draws hard-edged lines, the magnifying glass magnifies your images, and so on. These incredibly straightforward tools attract new users just as surely as a light attracts miller moths.

Figure 1-1: Many of the Photoshop tools have an old-world, rustic charm that's sure to warm the cockles of the most timid technophobe.



Likewise, painting is just what it sounds like: You take a brush loaded with color and smear it all over your on-screen image. You can paint from scratch on a blank canvas, or you can paint directly on top of a photograph.

Notice in Figure 1-2 the rather drab fellow drinking a rather drab beverage. (Though you may guess this man to be Dr. Jekyll armed with the secret potion, most scholars consider it highly doubtful that even Jekyll was this goofy.)

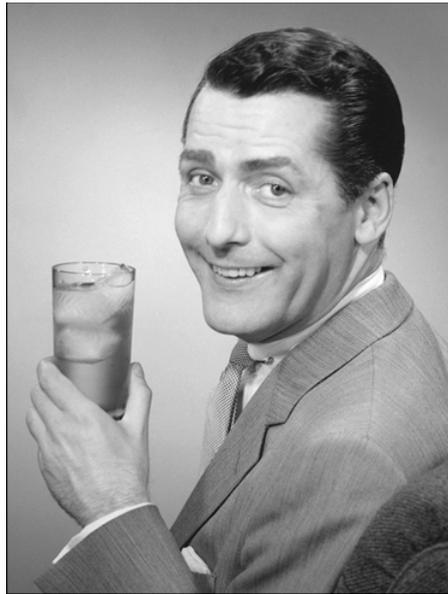
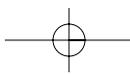
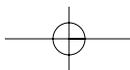


Figure 1-2:
The
unadorned
“I Love My
Libation”
poster boy
of 1948.

I invoked all the changes in Figure 1-3 by using a single tool — the brush — and just two colors — black and white. Suddenly, a singularly cool dude emerges. By saving the original image to disk (as explained in Chapter 3), you don’t have to worry about making permanent changes to your images. You can restore details from the original image at whim (the subject of Chapter 14).



Figure 1-3: A
few
hundred
strokes of
the brush
result in a
party animal
to rival
Carmen
Miranda.



12 Part I: Getting the Basics Down

You quickly discover that, on their own, the painting tools aren't super-duper exciting. Also, the tools don't work much like their traditional counterparts — a line drawn with the Pencil tool, for example, doesn't look anything like a line drawn with a real pencil. Here's another little issue — the so-called straightforward tools aren't particularly applicable to the job of editing images. Generally speaking, you have to be blessed with pretty major eye-hand coordination to achieve good results using these tools.

Editing existing image detail

The remade man in Figure 1-3 is the life of the party, but he's nothing compared to what he could be with the aid of some image editing. When you edit an image, you distort and enhance its existing details. So rather than paint with color, you paint with the image itself.

Unfortunately, that's when you discover the Mr. Hyde half of the program. You encounter options that have meaningless names such as Dissolve, Multiply, and Difference. Commands such as Image Size and Trim — both of which sound harmless enough — seem to damage your images. And clicking icons frequently produces no result. It's enough to drive a reticent computer artist stark raving insane.

Figure 1-4 demonstrates what I mean. To achieve this grotesque turn of the visual phrase, I was obliged to indulge in a liberal amount of distortion. First, I flipped the guy's head and stretched it a little bit. Well, actually, I stretched it a lot. Then, I further exaggerated the eyes and mouth. I rotated the arm and distorted the glass to make the glass meet the ear. Finally, I *cloned* a background from a different image to cover up where the head and arm used to be. The only thing I painted was the straw (the one coming out of the guy's ear). Otherwise, I lifted every detail from one of two photographs.

Okay, so that's a lot of complicated stuff I did. Unfortunately, many folks return broken and frustrated to the under-equipped and boring, but non-threatening, painting and editing tools that they've come to know. It's sad, really. Especially when you consider all the wonderful things that the more complex Photoshop controls can do. Oh sure, the controls have weird names, and they may not respond as you think they should at first, but after you come to terms with these slick puppies, they perform in ways you wouldn't believe.

In fact, the dreaded Mr. Hyde side of Photoshop represents the core of this powerful program. Without its sinister half, Photoshop is just another rinky-dink piece of painting software whose most remarkable capability is keeping the kids out of mischief on a rainy day.

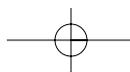


Figure 1-4:
Image editing has no respect for composition, form, or underlying skeletal structure.

Mind you, you don't have to go quite so hog-wild with the image editing. If you're a photographer, for example, you may not care to mess with your work to the point that it becomes completely unrecognizable. Figure 1-5 shows a few subtle adjustments that affect neither the form nor composition of the original image. These changes merely accentuate details or downplay defects in the image.

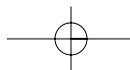
It's New! It's Improved!

Someday, the folks at Adobe may come out with an upgrade to Photoshop that completely tames the Mr. Hyde half of the program. But Photoshop cs isn't the upgrade to do it, which is good for me because it lets me continue with my colorful dual-personality analogy.



Photoshop cs is a great upgrade. The whole program is more polished, many existing features have been extended and enhanced, and several new items ramp up productivity 200 percent.

One thing that hasn't changed, however, is the hefty system requirements needed to run Photoshop. Photoshop cs works on PCs running Windows 2000 with Service Pack 3, or Windows XP and later Windows versions (all hereafter referred to as just *Windows*) with 280MB of available disk space. Photoshop cs runs on Macs running OS 10.2.4 or later with 320MB of available disk space. Both platforms require 192MB of RAM (256MB recommended) and a CD-ROM.



14

Part I: Getting the Basics Down

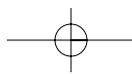


Figure 1-5:
You can
apply more
moderate
edits to your
image.

Please note that these are Adobe's *minimum* requirements. If there's one program that benefits from as much RAM as you can throw at it, it's Photoshop. The more you give it, the better the performance.

Here are some Photoshop cs improvements:

- ✔ **Use the File Browser with ease (see Chapter 3):** Introduced in Version 7, the File Browser is more powerful and easy to use than ever. New Photoshop cs features include the ability to preview high-quality images and create custom-sized thumbnails, drag images around to group or rank them, batch process groups of images, search for filenames, and open images directly to Photoshop or ImageReady.
- ✔ **Customize keyboard shortcuts (see Chapter 2):** This new feature speaks for itself. Although the program has always utilized shortcuts, now you can make up your own.
- ✔ **Use new photography features (see Chapters 9, 11, and 12):** Photoshop 7 introduced a Camera Raw plug-in that shipped separately. Photoshop cs integrates and enhances Camera Raw settings while supporting a wider range of cameras, and includes color calibration controls (see Chapter 9). To enhance photographs quickly, use the new Shadow/Highlight Correction command to quickly correct over- and under-exposed areas (see Chapter 9). Simulating real-world blurring, the



Lens Blur filter creates highlights that take on the shape of the camera lens (see Chapter 11). Create panoramas quickly by using the new Photomerge plug-in (see Chapter 12). The new Crop and Straighten Photos command separates multiple scanned photos into separate image files.

- ✔ **Utilize digital video enhancements:** Photoshop CS includes new video features including support for video screen formats such as wide-screen and full-screen television sizes. This means that pixels aren't always represented as squares. When a non-square pixel ratio is selected (for instance, a regular image uses a 1:1 pixel ratio, whereas a wide-screen video image uses a 1:2 pixel ratio), Photoshop automatically changes the appearance of shapes, text, and brushes to match the selected ratio. Although this new feature is beyond the scope of this book, suffice it to say that the folks at Adobe are adding exciting new features for video creators.
- ✔ **Replace Color Brush (see Chapter 12):** Located on the Toolbar in the Brush Tool slot, this new brush lets you replace existing color with the foreground color.
- ✔ **Brush Tool enhancements (see Chapter 12):** Photoshop CS lets you create brush groups for the Brush Tools.
- ✔ **New text features (see Chapter 17):** Photoshop CS now includes the capability of putting text on or inside a path and change the starting point of text on a path.
- ✔ **Create layer comps (see Chapter 8):** This new feature lets you capture document layer states, including layer visibility, position, and blending options. It's like taking a snapshot of layer settings that you can save for later. Using layer comps, you can switch comps while working on a document, cycle through saved comps to select one, and more.
- ✔ **Create PDF presentations (see Chapter 6):** This new plug-in lets you create Acrobat PDF presentations of your images with just a few clicks of the mouse.

Photoshop's sister program ImageReady is used to create Web images. ImageReady also includes many new features and improvements. You'll find these listed and discussed in Part VII, "Photoshop for Webbies."

16 Part I: Getting the Basics Down

Finding images to abuse

Just about any local drugstore has a photo lab that can turn photographs from your camera into colorful pieces of paper that you can slap into albums or frames. But what if you want those photos in a digital form, too? You can find plenty of affordable options if you look in the right places:

- ✔ You can purchase photos on CD-ROM (prices range from pocket change to several dollars per image). I like Getty Images, which is the parent of the popular PhotoDisc and FPG, Stone, and The Image Bank, among others. I also like Eyewire (also owned by Getty Images) and Corbis. These vendors are all available online. Check them out at: www.gettyimages.com, www.eyewire.com, and www.corbis.com. Prices can be high, so be sure to check *before* you download an image.
- ✔ You can find zillions of photos to download on the Internet or from online services like America Online. The problem is that images may be of dubious quality. Also, you can't rule out the possibility of running across something pornographic or otherwise distasteful. If you want high-quality, general-purpose images, you have to subscribe to specialized services such as Newscom (visit www.newscom.com or call (800) 601-NEWS). A full membership gives you access to all the a la carte and free content for \$10–\$20 a month. You are then billed additionally for any other images you download.
- ✔ Digital cameras are becoming less expensive and better in quality. Downloading images from your camera to your computer is also quick and easy. Photoshop accepts the two file formats, JPEG and TIFF, that most cameras utilize. (For more information on formats, see Chapter 3.)
- ✔ You can take your own photo into your local copy shop or service bureau, and scan the image to disk. Kinko's charges about \$6–\$15 per image. If you find yourself using this service frequently, it would be worth your time and money to invest in your very own scanner. The cost of scanners has plummeted in recent years. You can pick up scanners as cheap as \$30 for a CIS scanner, to \$1500 for a premium CCD scanner by a well-known manufacturer.
- ✔ A better (and cheaper) method is to scan images to a Photo CD, which costs between \$1 and \$2 a shot, plus the price of the CD itself, which is usually in the neighborhood of \$12–\$20. ProCD scans are around \$16–\$20 dollars per scan, but offer six resolutions instead of five. One CD can hold about 100 images. Some vendors allow you to supply your own media — blank CDs, Zip disks, and so on. They also provide you with a handy Index print of your images for a nominal fee of around \$5. Check the Yellow Pages under Photo Finishing — Retail. Service bureaus also provide this service. Prices vary widely from vendor to vendor.