

# CHAPTER 1

# Getting Started

Are you interested in working with digital images on your computer? This chapter introduces you to Adobe Photoshop Elements 11, a popular software application for editing and creating digital images. Photoshop Elements also enables you to organize your collection of digital images so you can easily find what you are looking for.



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# Introducing Photoshop Elements 11

Photoshop Elements is a popular photo-editing program you can use to modify, optimize, and organize digital images. You can use the program's Editor to make imperfect snapshots clearer and more colorful as well as retouch and restore older photos. With layers, you can isolate objects in your images and apply special effects just to those objects or combine multiple images into a collage. You can also use the program's Organizer to group your photos into albums, assign descriptive keyword tags, discover visually similar images, create slide shows, and more. When you are done with your images, you can use Photoshop Elements to save them for sharing on the web or print them out.

## Manipulate Photos

As its name suggests, Photoshop Elements excels at enabling you to edit elements in your digital photographs. The program includes numerous image-editing tools and commands you can apply to manipulate the look of your photos.

Whether you import photos from a digital camera or a scanner, you can apply a wide variety of editing techniques to your images, from subtle adjustments in color to elaborate filters that make your snapshots look like paintings. See Chapter 7 for more on manipulating selected parts of your photos. See Chapter 12 for more on painting and drawing, and see Chapter 13 for more on using filters.



## Retouch and Repair

You can use Photoshop Elements to edit new photos to make them look their best as well as retouch and repair older photos that suffer from aging problems. For example, you can restore a faded photo by using saturation controls to make it more vibrant, or

you can use the Clone Stamp tool to repair a tear or stain. You can also use the program's exposure commands to fix lighting problems as well as edit out unwanted objects with the Healing Brush. See Chapter 9 for more on retouching your photos.



## Add Decoration

The painting and drawing tools in Photoshop Elements make the program a formidable illustration tool as well as a photo editor. You can apply colors or patterns to your images with a variety of brush styles. See Chapter 12 to discover how to paint and draw on your photos. In addition, you can use the application's typographic tools to integrate stylized letters and words

into your images. See Chapter 14 for more on adding text elements.



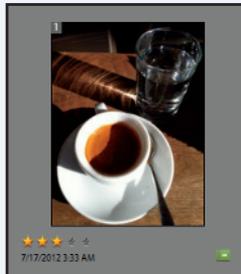
## Create a Digital Collage

You can combine parts of different images in Photoshop Elements to create a collage. Your compositions can include photos, scanned art, text, and anything else you can save on your computer as a digital image. By placing elements on separate layers, you can move, transform, and customize them independently of one another. See Chapter 8 for more on layers. You can also merge several side-by-side scenes into a seamless panorama, which is covered in Chapter 16.



## Organize and Catalog

As you bring photos into Photoshop Elements, the program keeps track of them in the Organizer. In the Organizer, you can place groups of photos into theme-specific albums, tag your photos with keywords, and search for specific photos based on a variety of criteria. You can also define the people who are in your photos, the places where photos were taken, and the events during which they were taken. See Chapters 3 and 4 for more on the Organizer.



## Put Your Photos to Work

After you edit your photographs, you can use them in a variety of ways. Photoshop Elements enables you to print your images, save them for the web, or bring them together in a slide show. You can share your photos on Facebook directly from the Organizer. You can also create photo books, calendars, and other projects. For more on creating and printing your photo projects, see Chapters 16 and 17.



# Understanding Digital Images

To work with photos in Photoshop Elements, you must first have them in a digital format. When a computer saves a photographic file, it turns the image content into lots of tiny squares called *pixels*. Digital cameras capture their photos as files made up of pixels. Editing a digital image is mostly about recoloring and rearranging pixels, at least on a small scale. Using Photoshop Elements can be a little easier when you remember this. This section introduces you to some important basics about how computers store images in digital form.

## Acquire Photos

You can acquire photographic images to use in Photoshop Elements from a number of sources. You can download photos to Photoshop Elements from a digital camera, memory card, or photo CD. You can scan photographs, slides, or artwork and then import the images directly into the program. You can also bring in photos that you have downloaded from the web. For more on importing photos, see Chapter 2.



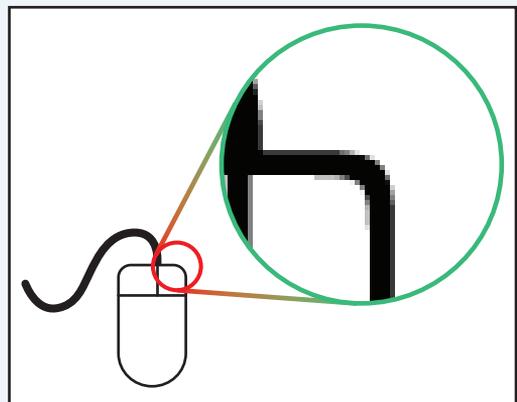
## Understanding Pixels

Digital images that you download from a camera consist of pixels, each composed of a single color. Photoshop Elements works its magic by rearranging and recoloring these pixels. You can edit specific pixels or groups of pixels by selecting the area of the photo you want to edit. If you zoom in close, you can see the pixels that make up your image. Chapter 5 covers the Zoom tool.



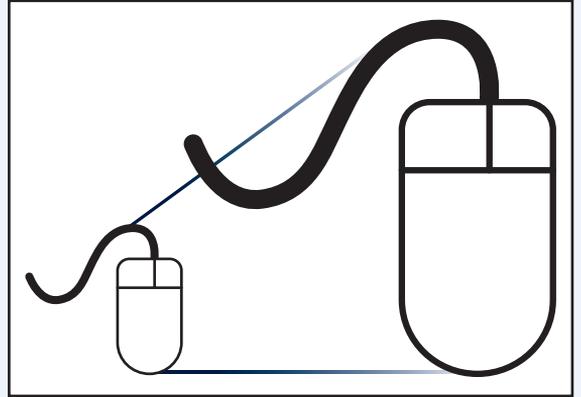
## Bitmap Images

Images composed of pixels are known as *bitmap images* or *raster images*. The pixels are arranged in a rectangular grid, and each pixel includes information about its color and position. Most of the time when you are working in Photoshop Elements, you are working with bitmap content.



## Vector Graphics

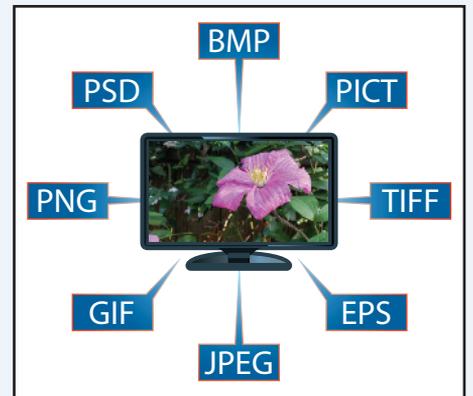
The other common way of displaying pictures on your computer is with vector graphics. Vector graphics encode image information by using mathematical equations instead of pixels. Unlike raster images, vector graphics can change size without a loss of quality. When you add shapes or text to your photos in Photoshop Elements, you are working with vector graphics.



## Supported File Formats

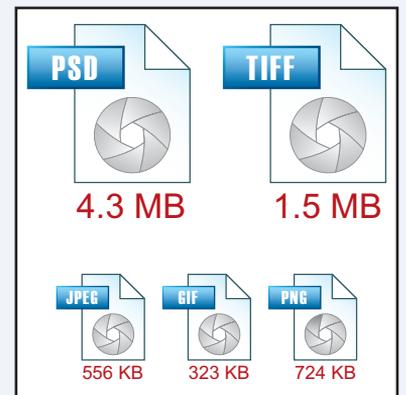
Photoshop Elements supports a variety of file types you can both import and export. Popular file formats include BMP, PICT, TIFF, EPS, JPEG, GIF, PDF, and PSD, which stands for Photoshop Document. Files that you save in the PSD, TIFF, and PDF formats can include layers and other information that cannot be saved with the other formats.

For images published on the Internet, JPEG, GIF, and PNG are the most common formats.



## File Size

An important way file formats differ from one another is the amount of storage they take up on your computer. File formats such as PSD and TIFF tend to take up more space because they faithfully save all the information that your camera or other device originally captured. Those formats can also include multiple layers. JPEG, GIF, and PNG files, on the other hand, are built to be sent over the Internet and usually sacrifice some quality for the sake of compactness.

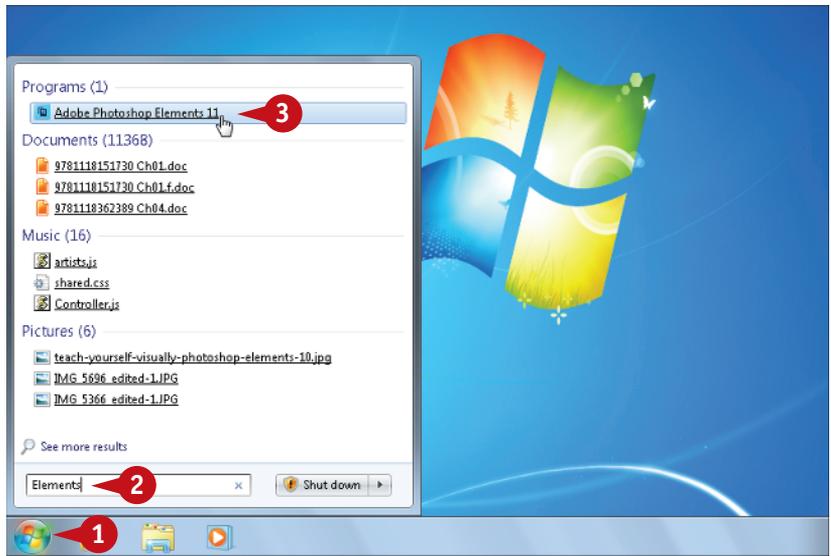


# Start Photoshop Elements

After you install Photoshop Elements, you can start it to begin creating and editing digital images. Common ways of obtaining and installing the program include from a DVD or from downloading it from Adobe over the Internet. On a PC, you can access Photoshop Elements as you do other programs — through the Start menu. On a Mac, you can access it through the Finder in the Applications folder or through Launchpad.

## Start Photoshop Elements

- 1 Click **Start**.
- 2 Type **Elements** in the search box.  
Windows displays a list of search results.
- 3 Click **Adobe Photoshop Elements 11**.



The Photoshop Elements welcome screen opens.

The welcome screen enables you to access the two different workspaces in Photoshop Elements.

- 4 Click **Photo Editor**.
- A You can click **Organizer** to open the Organizer.
  - B You can click  to access the startup settings.



# Explore the Editor Workspace

In the Photoshop Elements Editor, you can use a combination of tools, menu commands, and I-panel-based features to open and edit your digital photos. You can switch between editing modes to access different tool and panel arrangements. The main Editor pane displays the photos that you are currently modifying. To open the Editor, click **Photo Editor** on the welcome screen.



## A Image Window

Displays each photo you open in Photoshop Elements

## B Image Tabs

Clickable tabs for switching between open images in the Editor

## C Organizer Button

Clickable button for switching to the Organizer interface, where you can catalog your photos

## D Mode Buttons

Clickable buttons for switching between editor modes, each having

a different arrangement of tools and panels (Expert mode is shown)

## E Panel Bin

A storage area for panels, which are the resizable windows that hold related commands, settings, and other information

## F Photo Bin

Enables you to open and work with multiple photos

## G Task Bar

Contains buttons for showing and hiding panels and executing common commands

## H Tools

Clickable icons that represent the editing tools in Photoshop Elements

## I Open Button

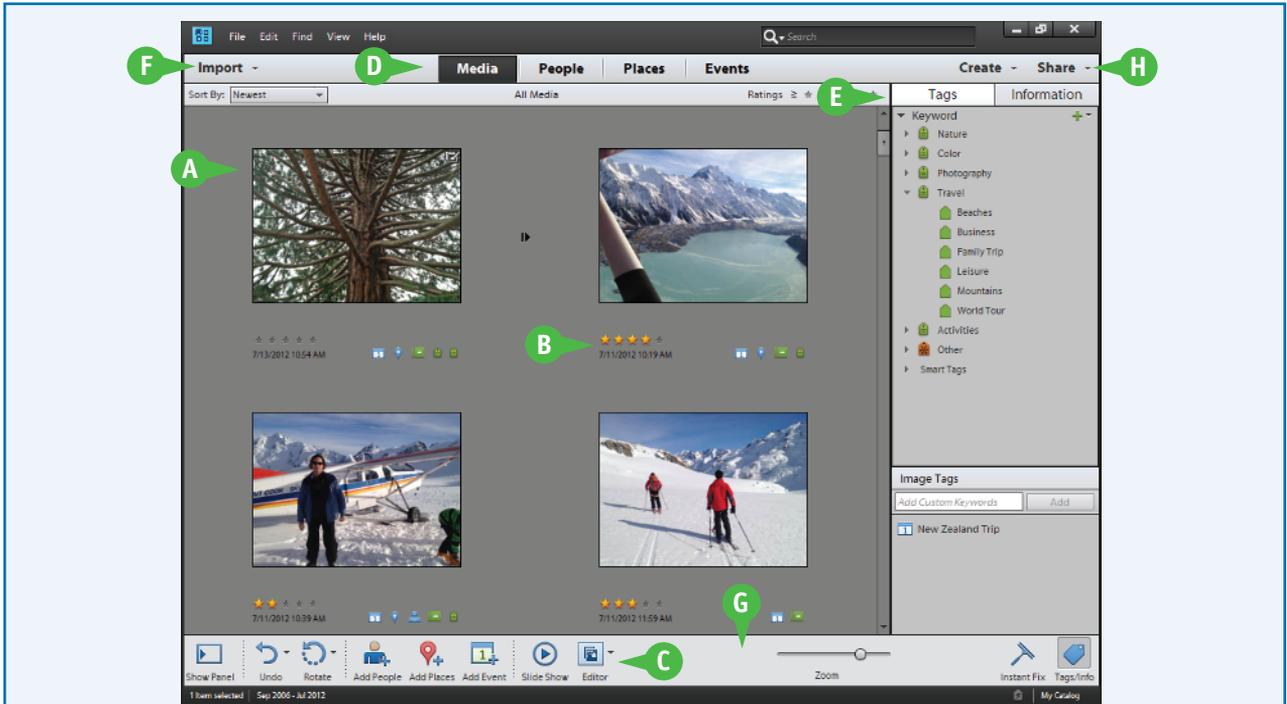
Clickable button for opening photos to start editing

## J Create Button

Clickable button for accessing a menu of photo-related projects

# Tour the Organizer Workspace

In the Photoshop Elements Organizer, you can catalog, view, and sort your growing library of digital photos. The main Organizer pane, called the Media Browser, shows miniature versions of the photos in your catalog. To open the Organizer, click **Organizer** on the welcome screen.



## A Media Browser

Displays miniature versions, or *thumbnails*, of the photos and other media in your catalog

## B Photo Details

Shows ratings information and the categories associated with each photo

## C Editor Button

Clickable button for switching to the Editor interface, where you can edit your photos

## D View Buttons

Clickable buttons for switching to different views in the Organizer

## E Panel Bin

A storage area for panels, which are the resizable windows that hold related commands, settings, and other information

## F Import Button

Clickable button for importing photos from a camera, folder, or other location to start organizing

## G Task Bar

Contains buttons for showing and hiding panels, creating categories, and executing common commands

## H Share Button

Clickable button for sharing via social networks, e-mail, and more

# Switch Between the Organizer and the Editor

Photoshop Elements has two main workspaces: the Organizer and the Editor. The Organizer lets you browse, sort, share, and categorize photos in your collection, and the Editor enables you to modify, combine, and optimize your photos. You can easily switch between the two environments.

You can use the Organizer to review your photos to find images for your projects. After you select your photos in the Organizer, you can open the Editor to adjust the colors, lighting, and other aspects of the photos, and then switch back to the Organizer to choose more photos to edit.

## Switch Between the Organizer and the Editor

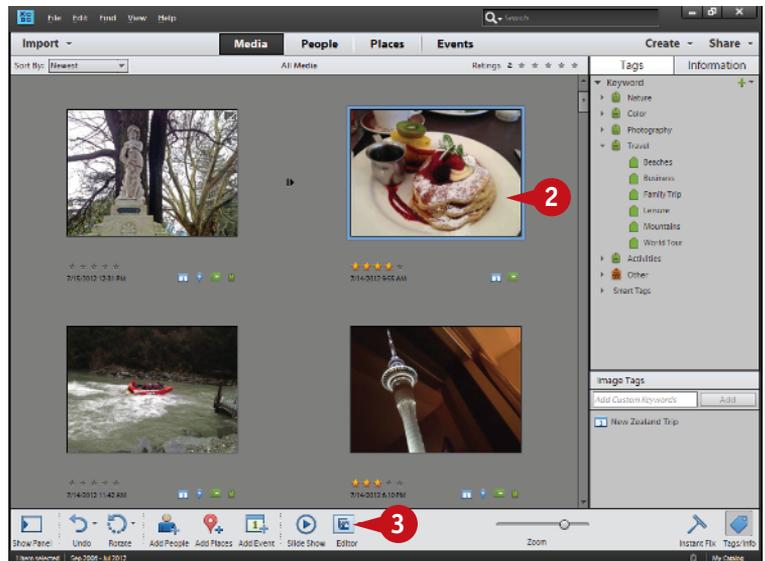
- 1 Start Photoshop Elements in the Organizer view.

**Note:** See the section “Start Photoshop Elements” for more on starting the program.

You can browse and sort your photos in the Organizer.

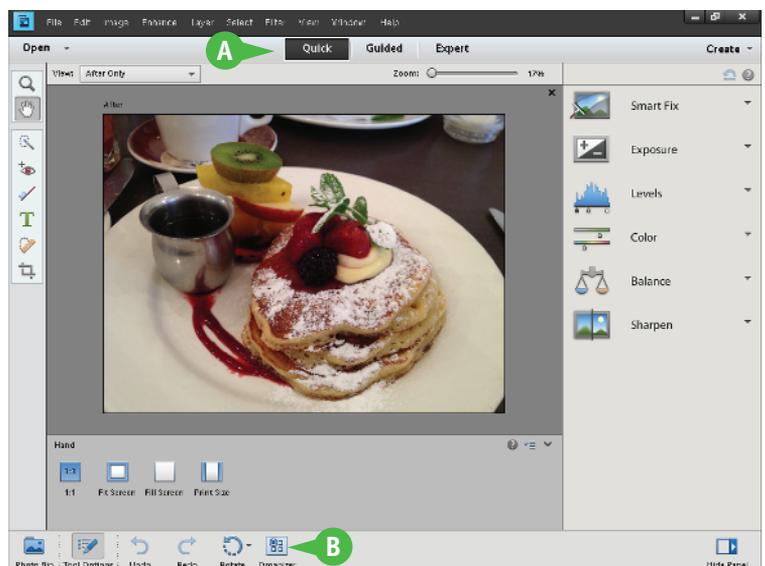
**Note:** For more about using the Organizer, see Chapters 3 and 4.

- 2 Click a photo to select it.
- 3 Click the **Editor** button.



The photo opens in the Editor. If the Editor is not already running, it may take a few moments to launch.

- A The Editor opens in whatever mode you last used.
- B You can click the **Organizer** button to return to the Organizer.



# Introducing the Photoshop Elements Tools

In the Editor, Photoshop Elements offers a variety of specialized tools that enable you to manipulate your image. You can select tools by clicking icons on the left side of the workspace or by typing a keyboard shortcut key. Keyboard shortcut keys are shown in parentheses. Each Editor mode features a different set of tools. Expert mode, which has the most tools available, is shown here.

## **A Zoom (Z)**

Zooms your view of an image in or out

## **B Hand (H)**

Moves the image to reveal off-screen portions of the image

## **C Move (V)**

Moves selected areas of an image

## **D Marquee (M)**

Defines an area of an image by drawing a box or ellipse around the area you want to edit

## **E Lasso (L)**

Selects pixels by drawing a free-form shape around the area you want to edit

## **F Quick Selection (A)**

Selects areas of an image based on color similarity and edges

## **G Red-Eye Removal (Y)**

Corrects red-eye problems

## **H Spot-Healing Brush (J)**

Repairs imperfections by copying nearby pixels

## **I Smart Brush (F)**

Simultaneously selects and applies a wide variety of different effects

## **J Clone Stamp (S)**

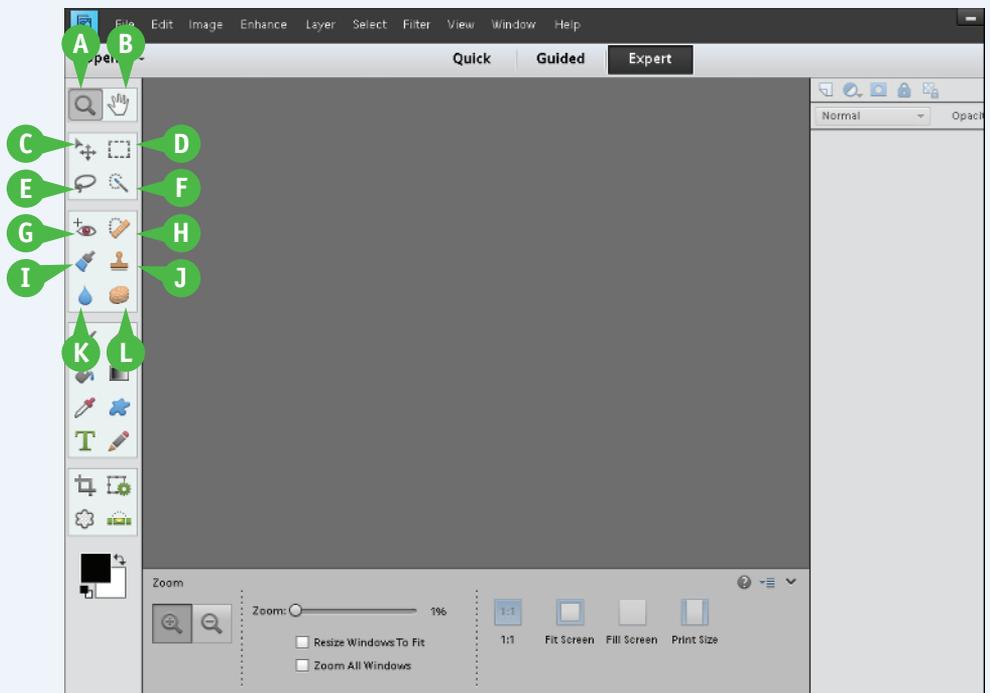
Paints pixels from one part of an image to another part

## **K Blur (R)**

Blurs selected portions of your image

## **L Sponge (O)**

Increases or decreases color saturation or intensity



**A Brush (B)**

Paints strokes of color

**B Eraser (E)**

Erases pixels by replacing them with background color or making them transparent layers

**C Paint Bucket (K)**

Fills a selected area with a single color

**D Gradient (G)**

Fills areas with blended color effects

**E Eyedropper (I)**

Samples color from an area of an image

**F Custom Shape (U)**

Draws predefined shapes

**G Type (T)**

Adds text to an image

**H Pencil (N)**

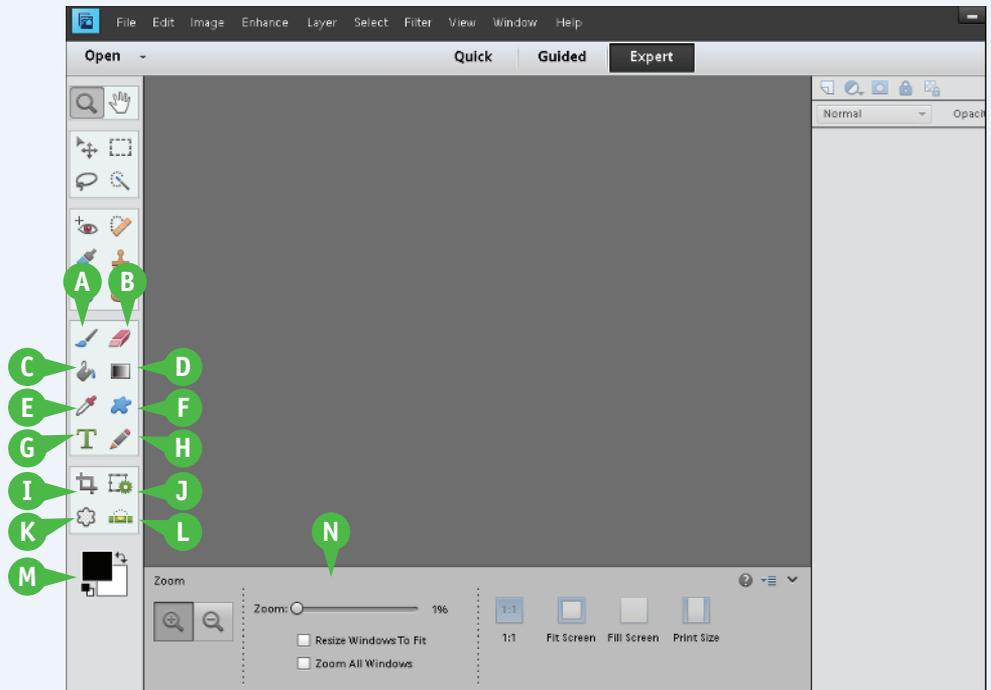
Draws hard-edged lines of color

**I Crop (C)**

Trims or expands an image to improve composition

**J Recompose (W)**

Intelligently change the size of a photo while keeping elements intact

**K Cookie Cutter (Q)**

Masks an image so only the image under the selected shape is available

**L Straighten (P)**

Straightens out a crooked image or changes the orientation of an image

**M Foreground and Background Color**

Sets foreground and background colors to use with tools

**N Tool Options Panel**

Displays settings to customize the selected tool

# Switch Editor Modes

The Photoshop Elements Editor has three modes: Quick Edit, Guided Edit, and Expert Edit. You can switch modes based on the tools you need and the workflow you are comfortable with.

Quick Edit offers access to commonly used tools and optimization commands. It is perfect for the beginner or someone who wants to fix photos quickly. Guided Edit features step-by-step instructions paired with tools for fixing photos and adding special effects. Expert Edit gives you access to most of the program's tools and the more complex commands.

## Switch Editor Modes

1 Open a photo in the Editor.

**Note:** See Chapter 2 for information about opening photos.

2 Click **Quick**.

Quick Edit mode appears.

A Click here to select a tool.

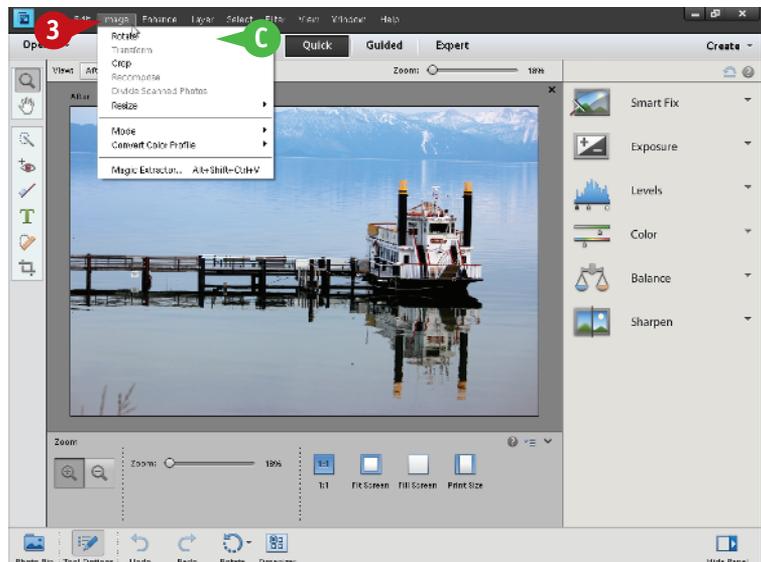
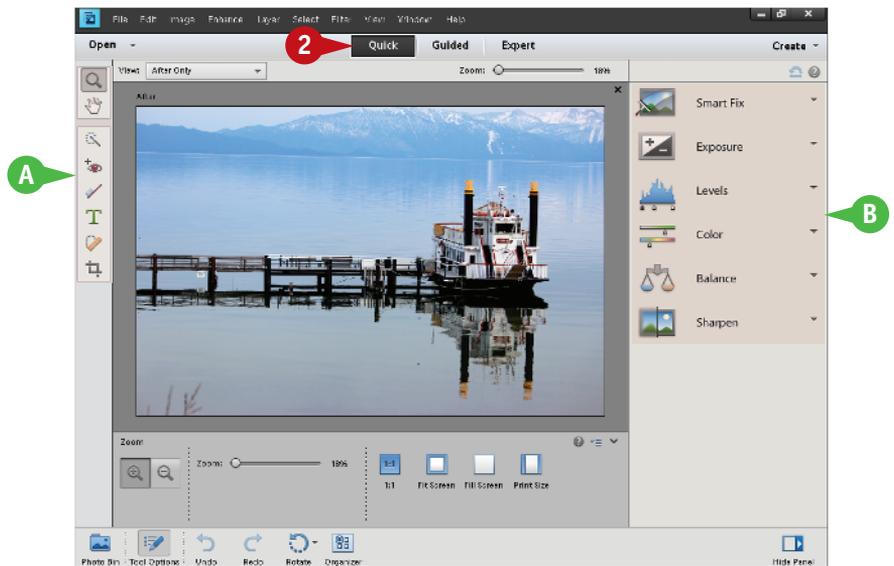
**Note:** For more about tools, see “Work with Tools.”

B Click here to access optimization settings.

3 Click a menu.

Photoshop Elements displays the menu commands.

C Some commands are grayed out and disabled, depending on the mode.

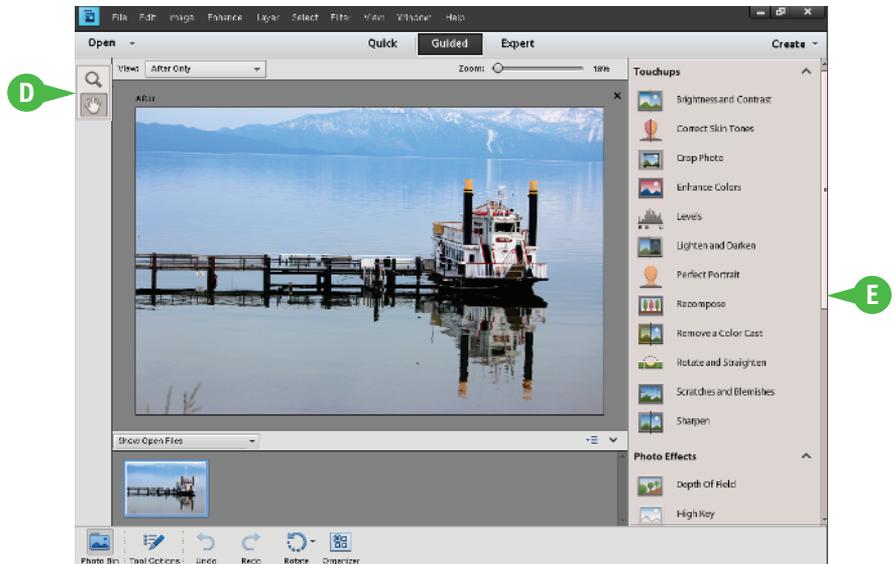


**4** Click **Guided**.

Guided Edit mode appears.

**D** Click here to select a tool.

**E** Click here to access step-by-step instructions for editing photos.

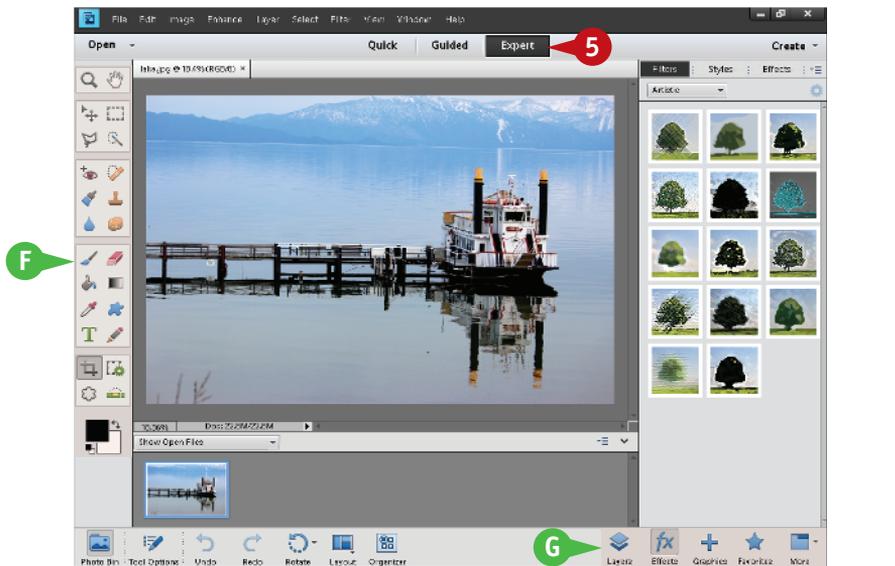
**5** Click **Expert**.

Expert Edit mode appears.

**F** Click here to select a tool.

**G** Click here to open and close panels.

**Note:** See “Work with Panels” for more information.

**TIPS****How do I view before and after versions of photos as I edit them?**

In Quick Edit and Guided Edit, you can click the **View** menu in the upper left. Select a Before & After view to display both versions of the current photo. You can choose horizontal and vertical versions, depending on the orientation of your photo.

**How can I get extra help when learning about Photoshop Elements features?**

Click the **Help** menu and then click a help-related command. The Key Concepts, Support, Video Tutorials, and Forum commands take you to the Adobe.com website. They require you to have an Internet connection.

# Work with Tools

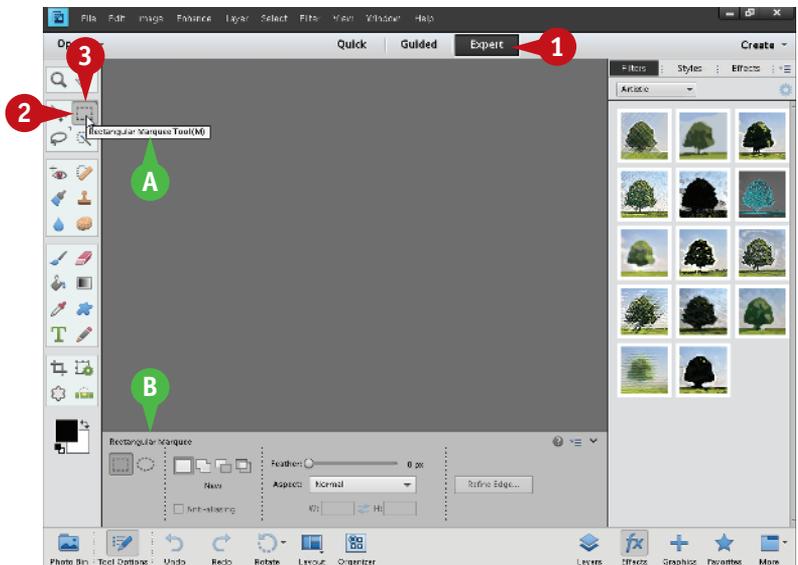
You can use the tools in Photoshop Elements to make changes to an image. After you click to select a tool, the Tool Options panel displays controls for customizing how the tool works. For example, after you select the Rectangular Marquee tool, you can adjust the Tool Options panel settings to determine the height and width of the tool.

Some tools display a tiny mark in the upper right corner when you position the cursor over them, indicating related tools you can select. For example, the Lasso tool includes two additional variations: Polygonal Lasso and Magnetic Lasso.

## Work with Tools

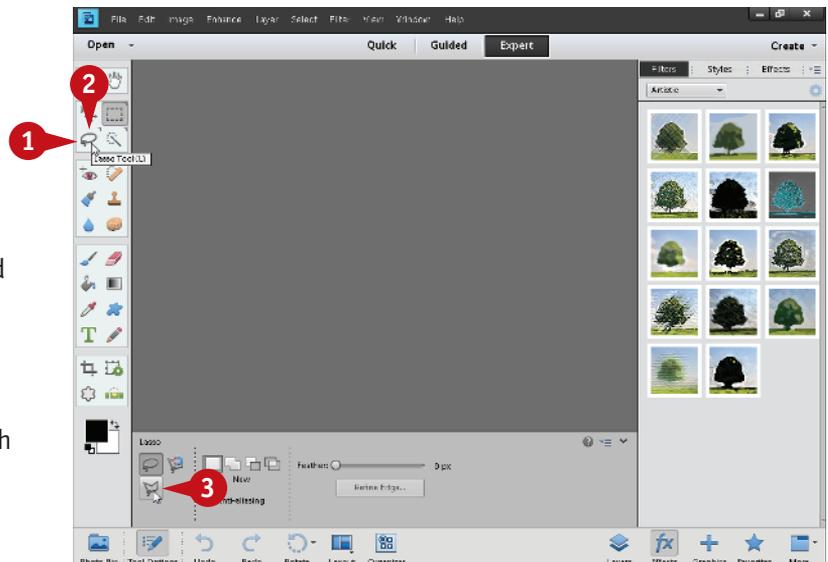
### Select a Tool

- 1 Click an Editor mode.
- 2 Position the mouse pointer over a tool.
  - A A screen tip displays the tool name and shortcut key. You can click the tool name to access help information about the tool.
- 3 Click a tool to select it.
  - B The Tool Options panel shows settings for customizing the selected tool. Specify any options you want for the tool.



### Select a Related Tool

- 1 Position your mouse pointer over a tool.
- 2 Click a tool that has a  in its corner. Photoshop Elements displays the clicked tool and one or more related tools in the Tool Options panel.
- 3 Click one of the related tools. You can also press a tool's shortcut key more than once to cycle through the related tools.



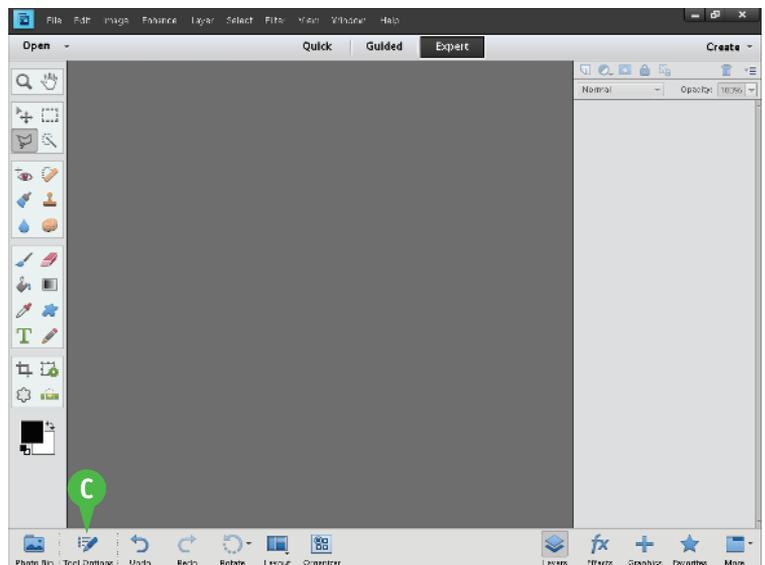
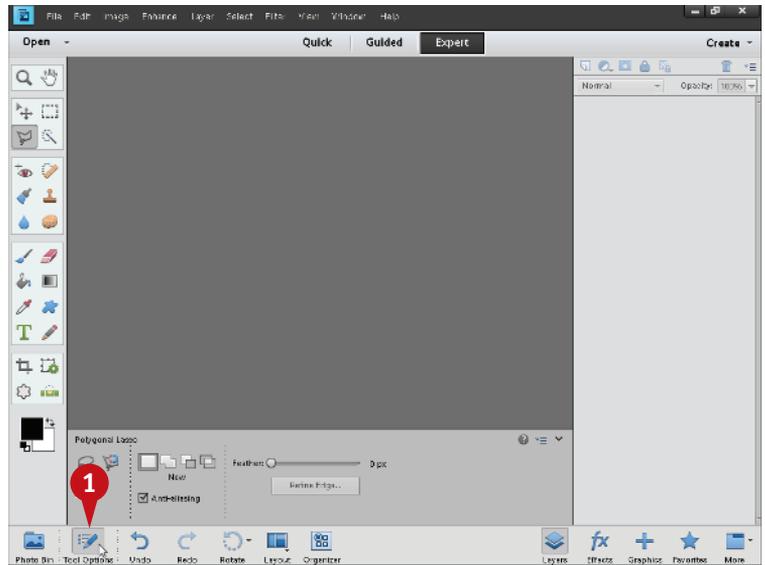
## Close the Tool Options Panel

You can close the Tool Options panel to give you more space to view and edit your photos.

- 1 Click the **Tool Options** button.

The Tool Options panel closes.

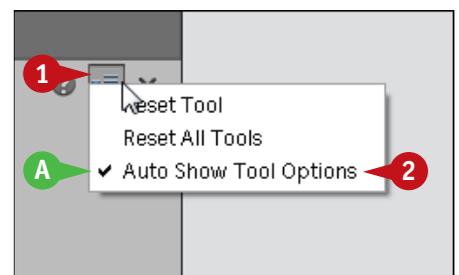
- c You can click the **Tool Options** button again to open the Tool Options panel.



### TIP

#### How can I keep the Tool Options panel hidden?

- 1 In the Tool Options panel, click .
  - a The  means the Tool Options panel is automatically shown when a tool is clicked.
  - 2 Click **Auto Show Tool Options** to deselect the option.
- Photoshop Elements keeps the Tool Options panel closed when you next click a tool.



# Work with Panels

In the Photoshop Elements Editor, you can open resizable panes called *panels* to access different Photoshop Elements commands and features. In Expert Edit, which is shown in this example, the more commonly used panels open in the Panel Bin located on the right side of the workspace. Other panels open in a tabbed, floating window.

The Layers panel gives you access to the one or more layers present in your image. Each layer can contain image content that can be moved and adjusted independent of the content in other layers. The Effects panel includes dozens of special effects that you can apply to your image to transform its appearance.

## Work with Panels

### Use the Main Panels

1 Open the Photoshop Elements Editor.

**Note:** For more on opening the Editor, see the section “Start Photoshop Elements.”

2 Click a button.

A You can also access panels in the Window menu.

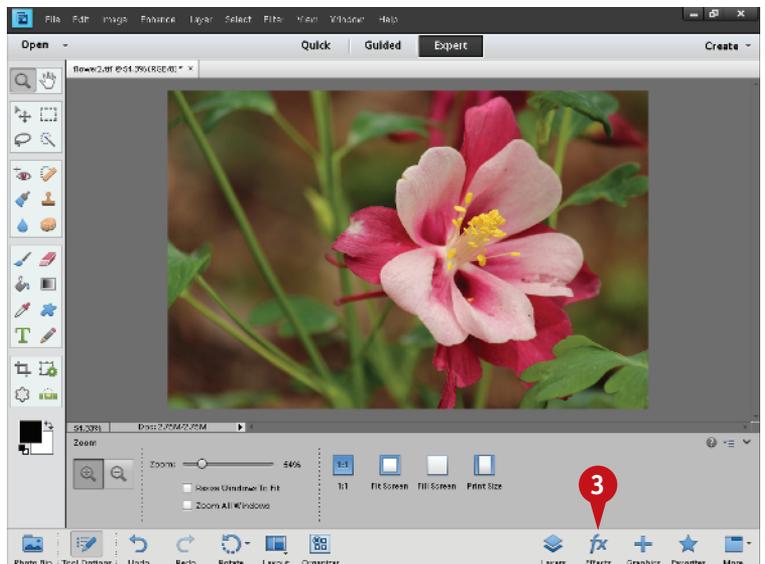
B The clicked panel opens in the Panel Bin.

C Buttons and menus enable you to filter available commands.

3 Click the panel button again.

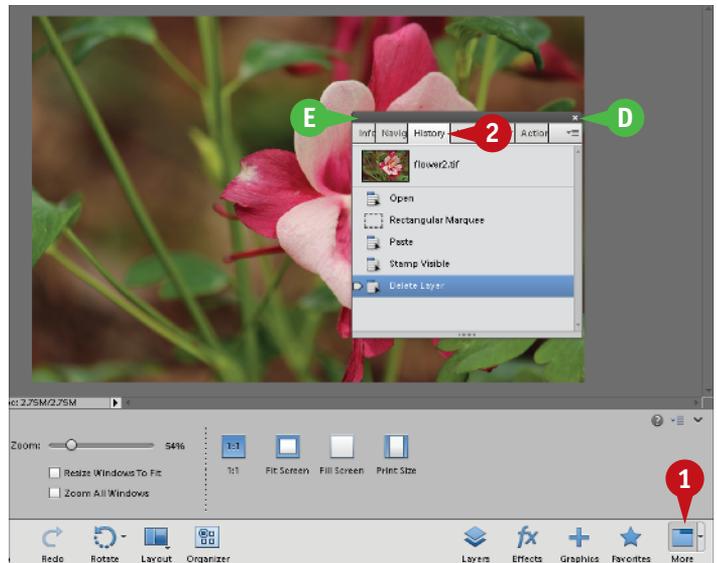
The panel closes.

By closing panels, you can have more workspace for editing photos.



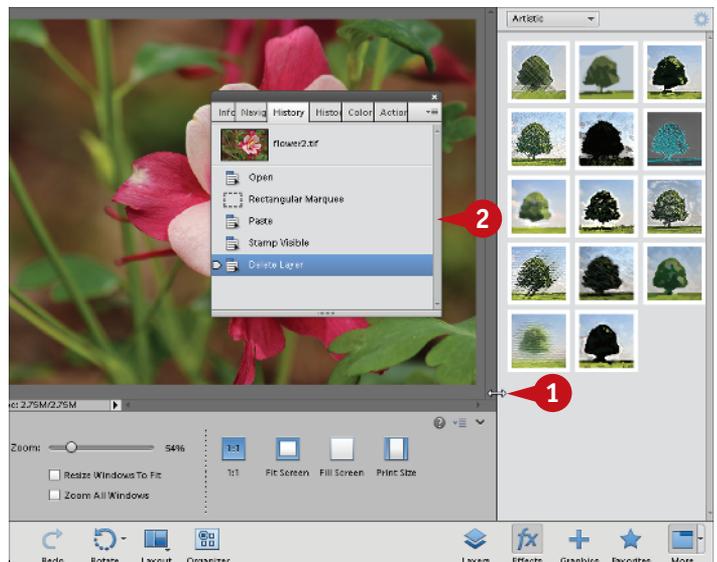
## Open More Panels

- 1 Click the **More** button.  
A window opens with tabbed panels.
- 2 Click a tab to access a panel.
- D You can click  to close the panel window.
- E You can click and drag the panel header to move the window.



## Resize Panels

- 1 To resize panels in the Panel Bin, move your cursor over the left edge of the bin and then click and drag.
- 2 To resize the panel window, click and drag the corner or edges. Not all panels in the panel window are resizable.  
The panels resize.



## TIPS

### What are the panels in the modes other than Expert Edit?

Quick Edit mode has a single panel that contains optimization tools. Guided Edit has a panel that lists step-by-step instructional tasks. You can hide the panel in Quick Edit but not in Guided Edit.

### How do I reset my panels?

Click **Window** and then **Reset Panels**. This resets the size of the panels and, in Expert Edit mode, sets the Panel Bin to the Layers panel.

# Set Program Preferences

The Photoshop Elements Preferences dialog box enables you to change default settings and modify how the program looks. You can set preferences in both the Editor and Organizer workspaces to customize the program to match how you like to work.

When you make changes to the program in the preferences, the changes remain after you exit the program and then open it again. In the Organizer, you can restore all preferences to their original state by clicking **Restore Default Settings** in the General preferences.

## Set Program Preferences

### In the Editor

- 1 In the Editor, click **Edit**. (On a Mac, click **Adobe Photoshop Elements Editor**.)

**Note:** For more on opening the Editor, see the section “Explore the Editor Workspace.”

- 2 Click **Preferences**.
- 3 Click **General**.

As an alternative, you can press **Ctrl+K** (**⌘+K** on a Mac).

The Preferences dialog box opens and displays General options.

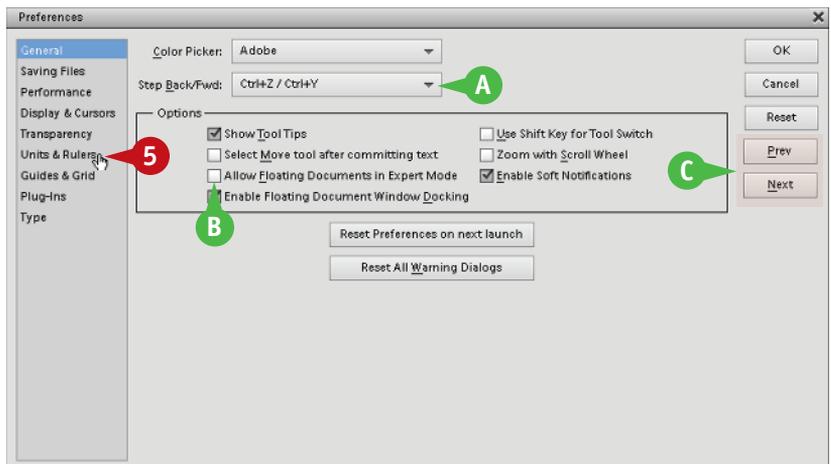
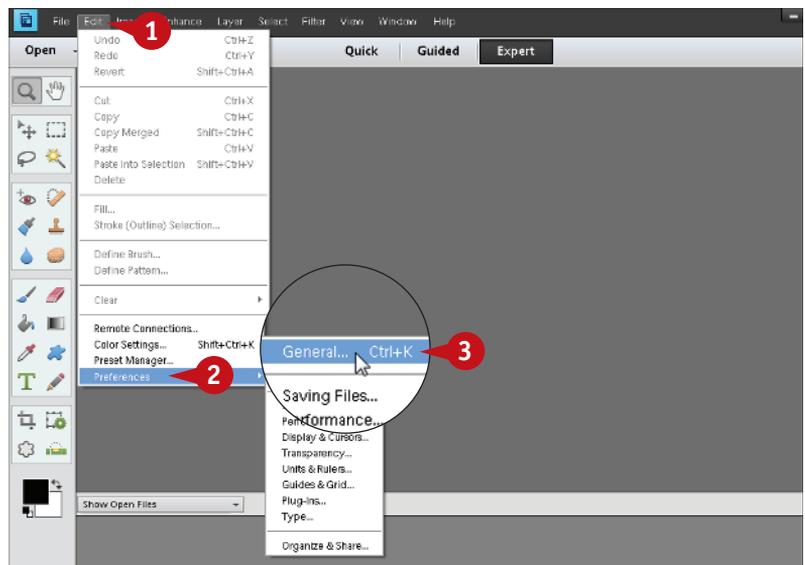
- 4 Select any settings you want to change.

- A For example, you can click the ▼ to specify the shortcut keys for stepping backward and forward through your commands.

- B You can click this option ( changes to ) to open images in floating windows instead of tabbed windows.

- 5 Click a different preference category.

- C You can also click **Prev** and **Next** to move back and forth between categories.



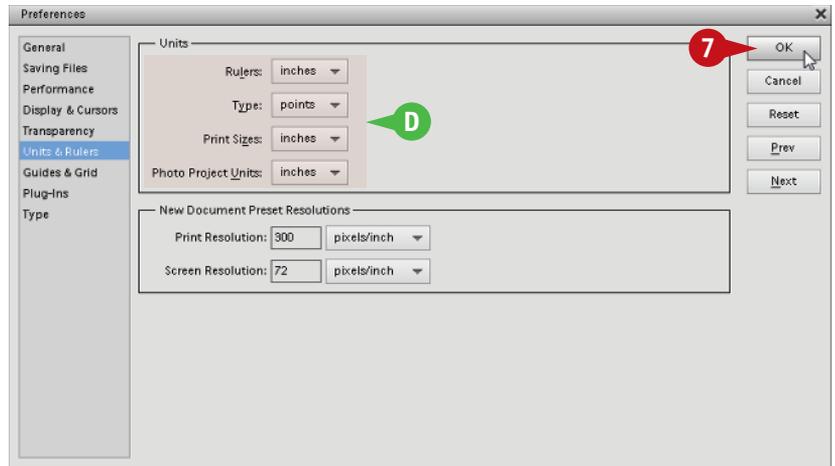
In this example, the Preferences dialog box displays Units & Rulers options.

**6** Select any settings you want to change.

**D** For example, you can specify the default units for various aspects of the program.

**7** Click **OK**.

Photoshop Elements sets the preferences.



## In the Organizer

**1** In the Organizer, repeat steps **1** to **3** in the previous set of steps, or press **Ctrl** + **K** (**⌘** + **K** on a Mac).

**Note:** For more on opening the Organizer, see the section “Tour the Organizer Workspace.”

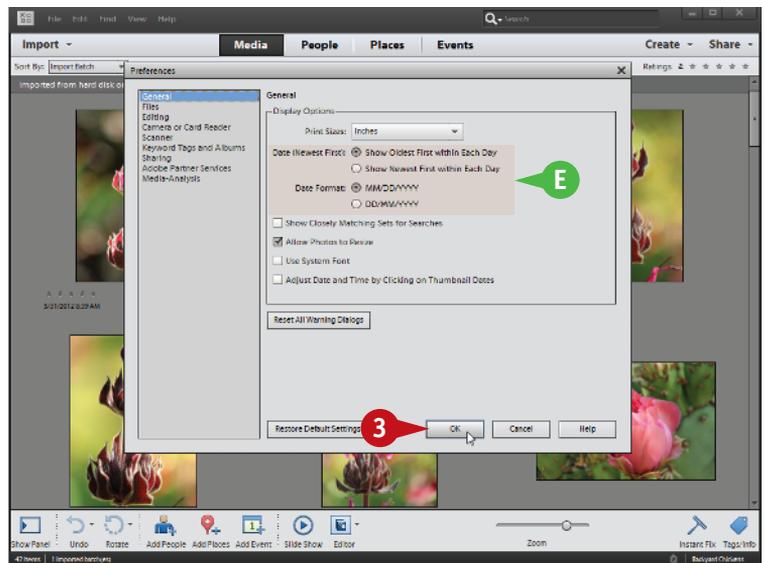
The Preferences dialog box opens.

**2** Select any settings you want to change.

**E** For example, you can specify date ordering and formatting preferences.

**3** Click **OK**.

Photoshop Elements sets the preferences.



## TIPS

### What type of measurement units should I use in Photoshop Elements?

Typically, you should use the units most applicable to the type of output you intend to produce. Pixel units are useful for web imaging because monitor dimensions are measured in pixels. Inches, picas, centimeters, or millimeters are useful for print because those are standards for working on paper.

### How do I allocate extra memory to Photoshop Elements for opening more image files?

The Performance preferences show how much memory, or *RAM*, you have available and how much of it Photoshop Elements is using. The Scratch Disks preferences enable you to allocate extra memory on your hard drive(s), called *scratch disk space*, to use if your computer runs out of *RAM*.

# View Rulers and Guides

In Expert mode, you can turn on rulers and guides to help place objects accurately in your image. Rulers appear at the top and left sides of the image window and enable you to measure distances within your image. To change the units of measurement associated with the rulers, see “Set Program Preferences.”

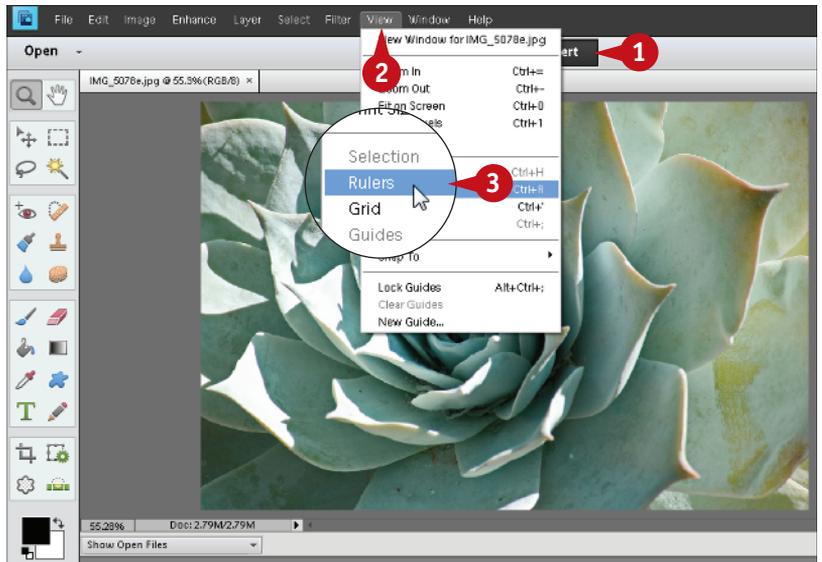
Guides are the lines that help you position different elements in your image horizontally or vertically. These lines do not appear on your image when you save the image for the web or print it.

## View Rulers and Guides

### Show Rulers

- 1 Click **Expert**.
- 2 Click **View**.
- 3 Click **Rulers**.

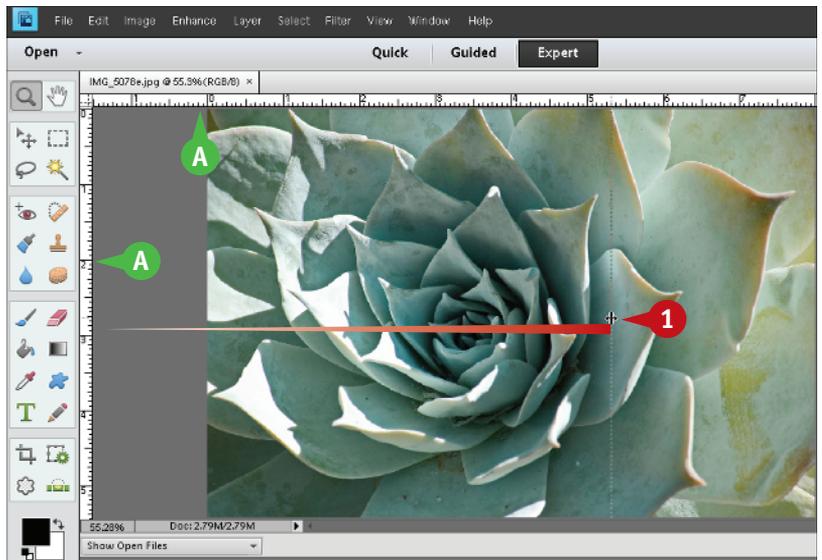
You can also press **Shift + Ctrl + R**.



- A Photoshop Elements adds rulers to the top and left edges of the image window.

### Create a Guide

- 1 Click one of the rulers and drag the cursor into the window (the cursor changes to a double-headed arrow).  
Drag the top ruler down to create a horizontal guide.  
Drag the left ruler to the right to create a vertical guide.

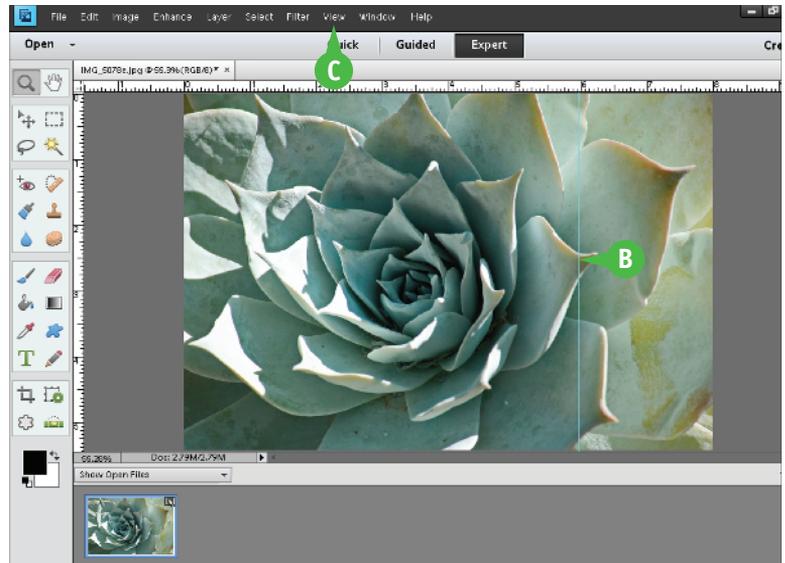


**B** A thin, colored line called a *guide* appears.

**C** You can also click **View** and then **New Guide** to add a guide.

You can use guides to align objects in the different layers of an image.

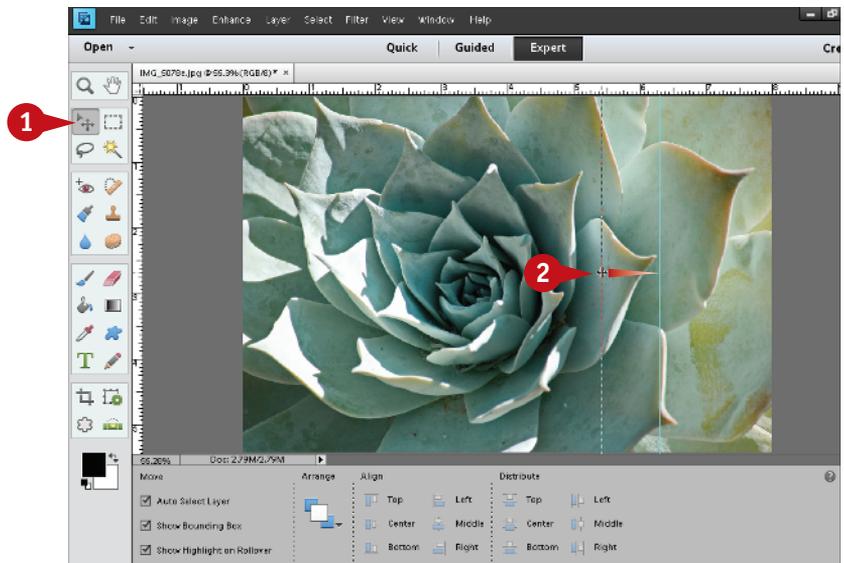
**Note:** See Chapter 8 for more about layers.



## Move a Guide

- 1 Click the **Move** tool ( $\text{V}$ ).
- 2 Position the mouse pointer over a guide (the mouse pointer changes to  $\text{H}$ ) and then click and drag.

You can also press **Ctrl + "** (**⌘ + "** on a Mac) to display a grid on your image. The lines of the grid can help you align objects in your image.



## TIP

### How do I make objects in my images “snap to” my guides when I move those objects?

The “snap to” feature is useful for aligning elements in a row or a column.

- 1 Click **View**.
- 2 Click **Snap To**.
- 3 Click **Guides**.

When you move an object near a guide, Photoshop Elements automatically aligns the object with the guide.

