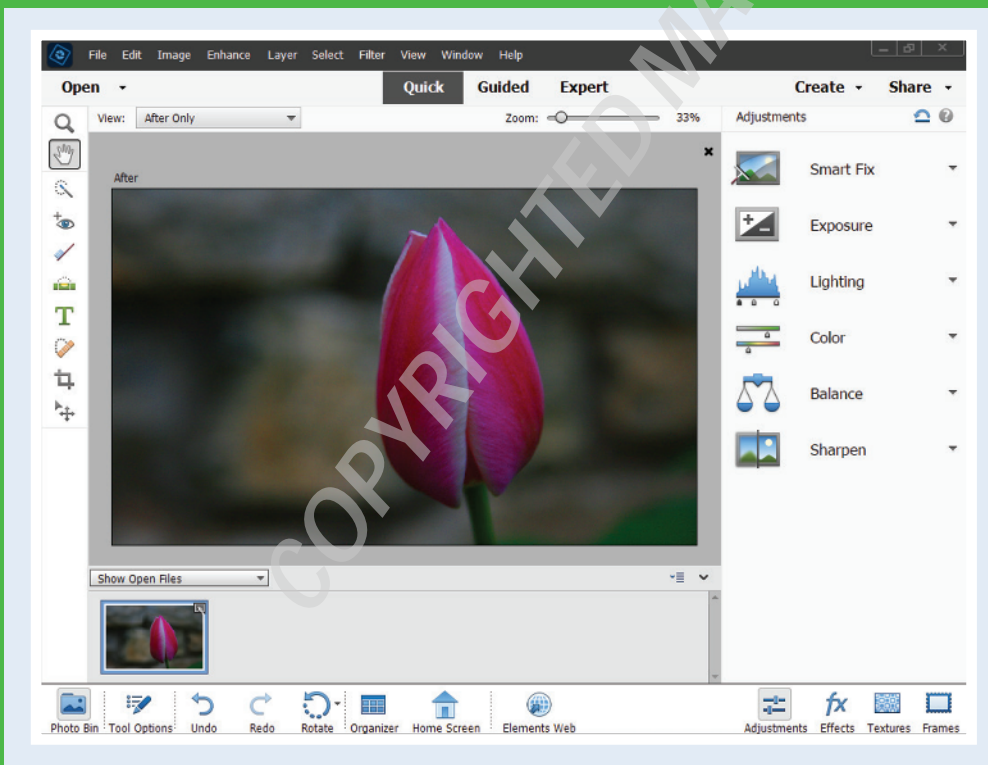


CHAPTER 1

Getting Started

Do you want to improve or transform your photos and digital images? Are you interested in creating projects that combine images, text, and more? This chapter introduces Adobe Photoshop Elements 2023, a popular photo editor and organizer.



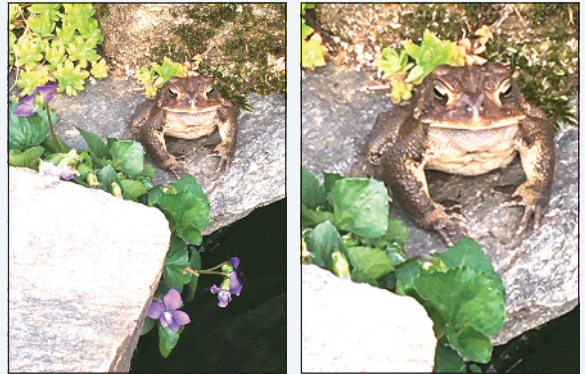
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Introducing Photoshop Elements 2023

You can use Photoshop Elements to edit, improve, and organize digital images. The program is split into two parts: the *Organizer* and the *Editor*. Use the Organizer to collect photos into albums, tag them, and search for specific photos. Use the Editor to improve the color and exposure of your photos, apply corrections, crop them, and transform them with creative effects. For example, you can add a virtual frame, make a photo look like a painting, add captions and other text, and decorate your photo with shapes and objects. The Editor supports layers, which make it easy to combine multiple images into a collage and experiment with changes without having to alter your original image. When you are finished editing your images in Photoshop Elements, you can print them and more.

Fix Photos

The Editor is packed with features you can use to make simple and quick improvements to your photos. You can apply one-click fixes for color and contrast, correct color and exposure manually, and stretch and shrink your photos in many different ways to correct perspective. You can crop photos to remove unwanted content and improve the composition. As you gain more experience, you can begin to select objects in your photos — including people — and move them within the photo or even delete them completely. You also can combine photos to create group shots and panoramas.



Retouch and Repair

You can use Photoshop Elements to edit new photos to make them look their best as well as retouch and repair scans of older photo prints. For example, you can restore a faded photo by using color saturation controls to make it more vibrant, or you can use the Clone Stamp tool to repair a tear or stain. You also can use the program's exposure and lighting commands to correct tone problems as well as using the Eraser and other tools to edit out unwanted objects.



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. And you also can add text, captions, speech or thought bubbles, and frames and other shapes.



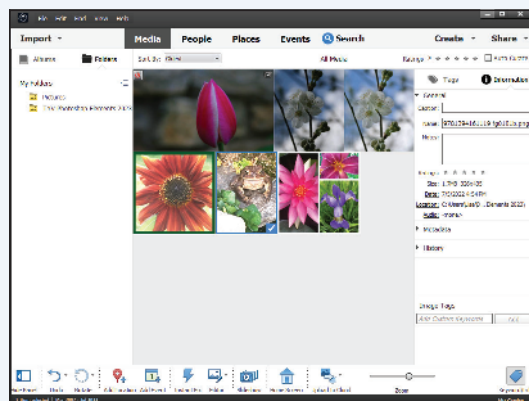
Create a Digital Collage

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, place, and edit them independently.



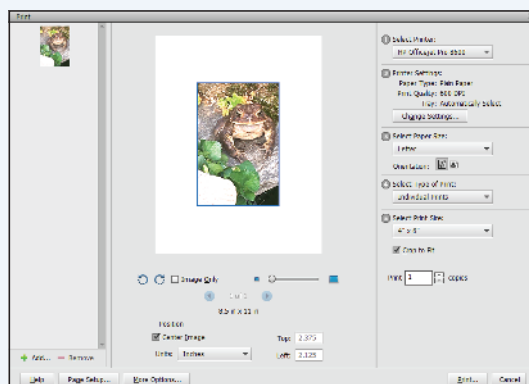
Organize and Catalog

As you bring photos into Photoshop Elements, the Organizer keeps track of them. You can preview photos from one convenient window, group photos into theme-specific albums, tag photos with keywords, and search for photos based on time and date, location, and any tags you added. You can even find photos that are visually similar and put names to faces in your photos.



Put Your Photos to Work

After you edit your photographs, you can print them using your own printer or even order prints and other special projects online. While it is not covered in detail in this book, you also can share your images online to social media such as Facebook or Twitter directly from the Editor. In the Organizer, you also can share via email or create slideshows.



Understanding Digital Images

Digital images are made of millions of tiny squares called *pixels*. When you take a photo with a digital camera or scan a photo with a scanner, the hardware converts the scene or the source image into a grid of pixels. 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 transfer photos to Photoshop Elements from a digital camera, a memory card, a photo CD, or, in some cases, your smartphone. You can import photographs, slides, or artwork by scanning the images directly into the Organizer. You also can bring in photos that you have downloaded from the web or received via email. You also can open images from any disk in the Editor.



Understanding Pixels

Each pixel is a single color. If you zoom in on your photo or image, you can see the pixels as a colored grid. An image with too few pixels (or low *resolution*) looks small on the screen and appears blurry or jagged when printed. Photos with too many pixels take up a lot of disk space when saved and require ample computer memory as you edit them. (Modern hardware typically includes generous disk storage and memory.) Photoshop Elements in part works its magic by rearranging and recoloring these pixels. You can edit specific pixels or groups of pixels by selecting the area of the image you want to edit.



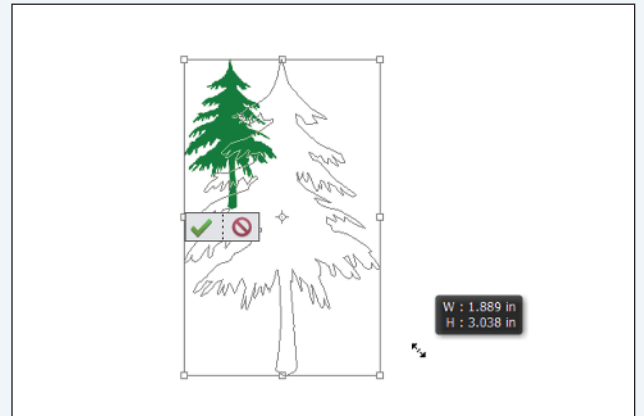
Bitmap Images

Images composed of pixels are known as *bitmap images* or *raster images*. Arranged in a rectangular grid, each pixel includes information about its color and position. For most of your work in Photoshop Elements, you will be working with bitmap content such as your digital photos, as well as shapes and objects you may draw.



Vector Graphics

Photoshop creates *vector graphics*, such as text and shapes, using mathematical formulas that define lines, points, curves, and shapes. You can stretch or shrink vector graphics as much as you want without losing sharpness, meaning the graphics are scalable. You can add text by typing, and you can resize text and shapes using your mouse. Photoshop Elements hides all the math that makes this possible.



Supported File Formats

Photoshop Elements supports a variety of files, including BMP, TIFF, JPEG, GIF, PDF, PNG, and PSD, which stands for Photoshop Document. The PSD, TIFF, and PDF formats can include layers. Other formats cannot. The most common formats for images published on the Internet are JPEG and PNG. Photoshop Elements also supports a variety of camera raw file formats.

Photoshop (*.PSD;*.PDD)
 BMP (*.BMP;*.RLE;*.DIB)
 CompuServe GIF (*.GIF)
 Photo Project Format (*.PSE)
 GIF (*.GIF)
 JPEG (*.JPG;*.JPEG;*.JPE)
 Photoshop PDF (*.PDF;*.PDP)
 Pixar (*.PXR)
 PNG (*.PNG;*.PNS)
 TIFF (*.TIF;*.TIFF)

File Size

Image file formats differ from one another in the amount of storage they take up on your computer. Formats such as PSD and TIFF take more space because they save a perfect copy of a photo. They also can include multiple layers. PNG files are perfect copies of a photo but do not include separate layers. JPEG and GIF use compression, sacrificing some quality for a smaller file size. Typically you can save your work as a PSD file while editing or printing and then save a separate copy as a JPEG or a PNG when you want to share the file online. When you save to the JPEG format, you also can specify a Quality setting that affects file size.

Ratings: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
 Size: 3MB 3264x2448
 Date: 9/10/2014 7:55 PM
 Location: C:\Users\Lisa\Pictures\
 Audio: <none>

Start Photoshop Elements

You can install Photoshop Elements from a download or a copy of the installer software stored on a USB drive or other media. After installation, you can launch Photoshop Elements in the usual ways. The method you use will depend on the type of computer you have and its operating system version.

On a PC, you can use a desktop shortcut icon or click the **Adobe Photoshop Elements 2023** choice in the All apps list on the Start menu. On a Mac, you can search for it in the Finder or through Launchpad, or add the Adobe Photoshop Elements 2023 icon to the Dock.

Start Photoshop Elements

- 1 Double-click the **Adobe Photoshop Elements 2023** shortcut icon on the Windows desktop.

The Photoshop Elements Home Screen opens.

You can open the Organizer or the Editor from the Home Screen.



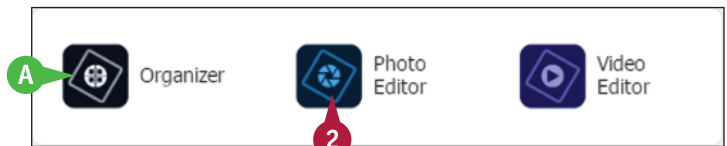
Note: In Windows 11, you can click the **Start** button on the taskbar, click **All apps**, and then click **Adobe Photoshop Elements 2023** in the list of apps to start Photoshop Elements. On a Mac, click the **Launchpad** icon on the Dock, start typing **Photoshop Elements** in the Search box at the top, and then click the **Adobe Photoshop Elements 2023** icon when it appears.

- 2 Click **Photo Editor**.

The Photoshop Elements Editor opens.

- A You can click **Organizer** to open the Organizer.

Note: To exit Photoshop Elements 2023 completely, click the window **Close** button (X) at the upper right for all open windows: Home Screen, Editor, and Organizer. On a Mac, the Close button is a red circle with an x in it at upper left.



Explore the Editor Workspace

To open the Editor, click **Photo Editor** on the Home Screen. You can then use its tools, menu commands, and panel-based features to edit your digital photos and other images. You can select Quick, Guided, and Expert editing modes to reveal different editing options. The main area of the Editor displays the photo(s) you are editing.

A Active Image Area

This displays the photo you are editing.

B Image Tabs

These tabs switch between open images in the Editor.

C Organizer Button

This button opens or switches to the Organizer, where you can catalog your photos.

D Mode Buttons

These buttons switch among the three editing modes. (Expert mode is shown.)

E Panel Bin

This is an area for panels, which display information about layers, effects, graphics, and editing options.

F Photo Bin

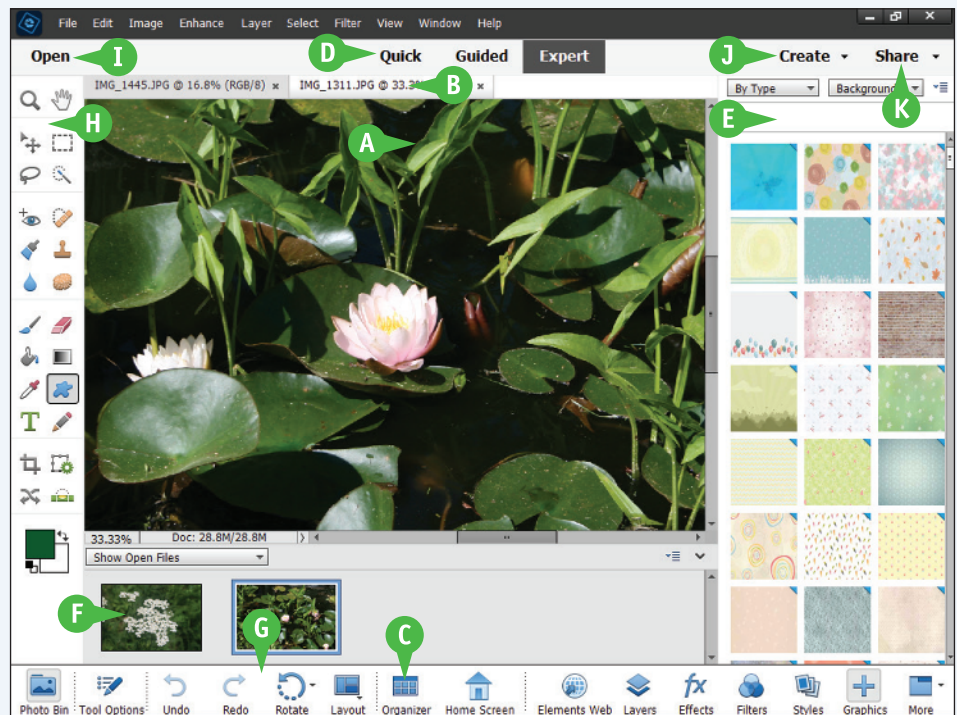
This lists the open photos you can edit.

G Taskbar

These buttons select panels and various options. They also include important editing commands, including Undo.

H Toolbox

These icons are the main editing tools in Photoshop Elements.



I Open Button

Click this button to select and open a photo for editing.

J Create Button

Click this button to create various photo-based projects such as calendars, CD/DVD jackets, and collages.

K Share Button

Click this button to share photographs on a photo website and select social media networks.

Tour the Organizer Workspace

In the Photoshop Elements Organizer, you can catalog, view, and sort your growing library of digital photos and other images. The main Organizer pane, which displays the Media view by default, shows miniature versions of the photos in your catalog. To open the Organizer, click **Organizer** on the Home Screen.

A Media View

This displays miniature versions, or *thumbnails*, of the photos and other media in your catalog.

B Editor Button

This button opens or switches to the Editor workspace, where you can edit your photos.

C View Buttons

These buttons switch between views in the Organizer.

D Panel Bin

This is an area for panels, which display quick fix, tagging, or photo information.

E Import Button

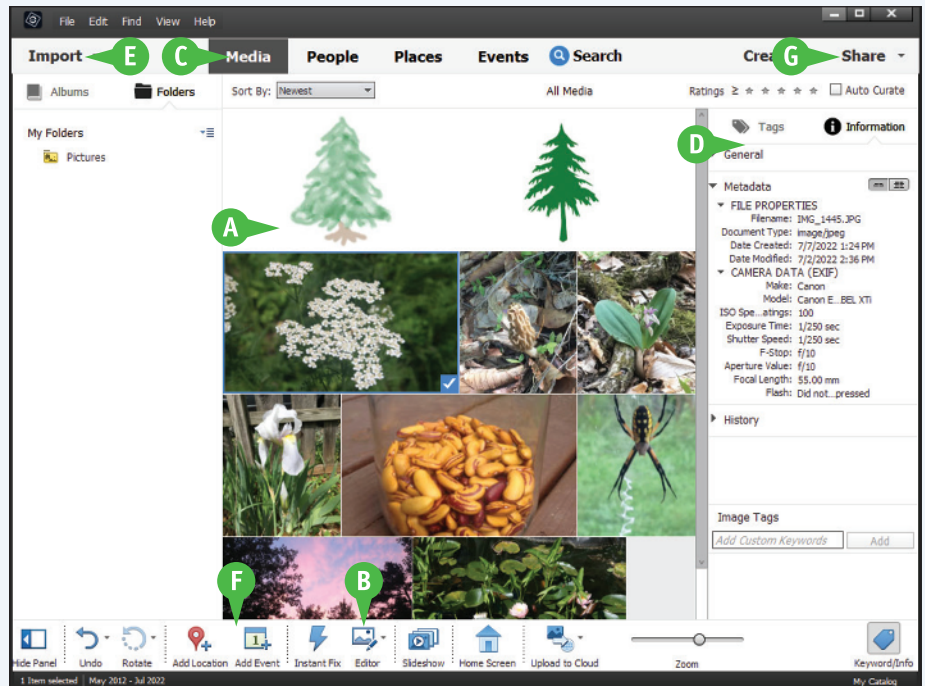
Click this button to import photos and other images from a folder on an internal or external drive, camera or card reader, or scanner.

F Taskbar

These buttons select panels and various options. They also include important editing commands, including Undo.

G Share Button

Click this button to share your photo by email, on social media, 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 the Photoshop Elements Organizer.

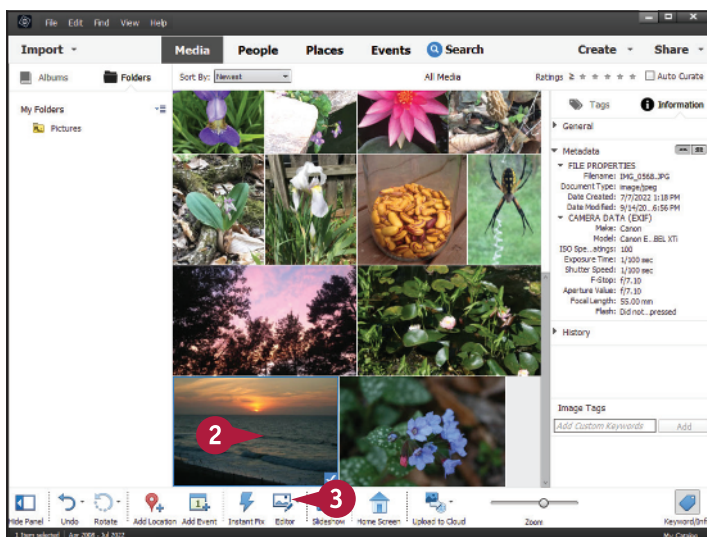
Note: See the section “Start Photoshop Elements” for more on starting the program.

You can browse and sort your photos in the Organizer.

Note: For more about adding photos to the Organizer, see Chapter 2.

2 Click a photo to select it.

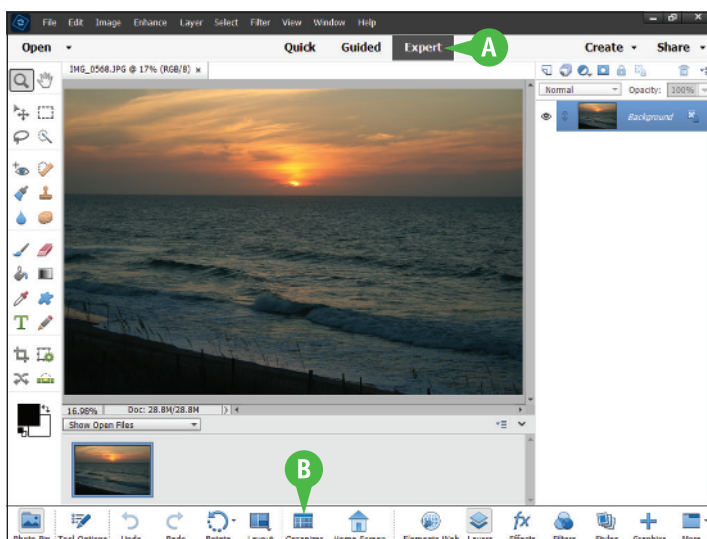
3 Click **Editor**.



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 **Organizer** 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 pressing a keyboard shortcut key. Keyboard shortcut keys are shown in parentheses. Many tools create *selections* — areas you can edit. Each editing mode displays different tools. Expert mode displays all the tools, as shown here.

A Zoom (Z)

Expand/shrink the image in the preview area.

B Hand (H)

Drag the image when it is too big to display fully in the active image area.

C Move (V)

Move a selection.

D Marquee (M)

Create a rectangular or oval selection.

E Lasso (L)

Draw a free-form selection shape with your mouse.

F Quick Selection (A)

Create a selection by looking for similar colors or contrasting edges.

G Eye (Y)

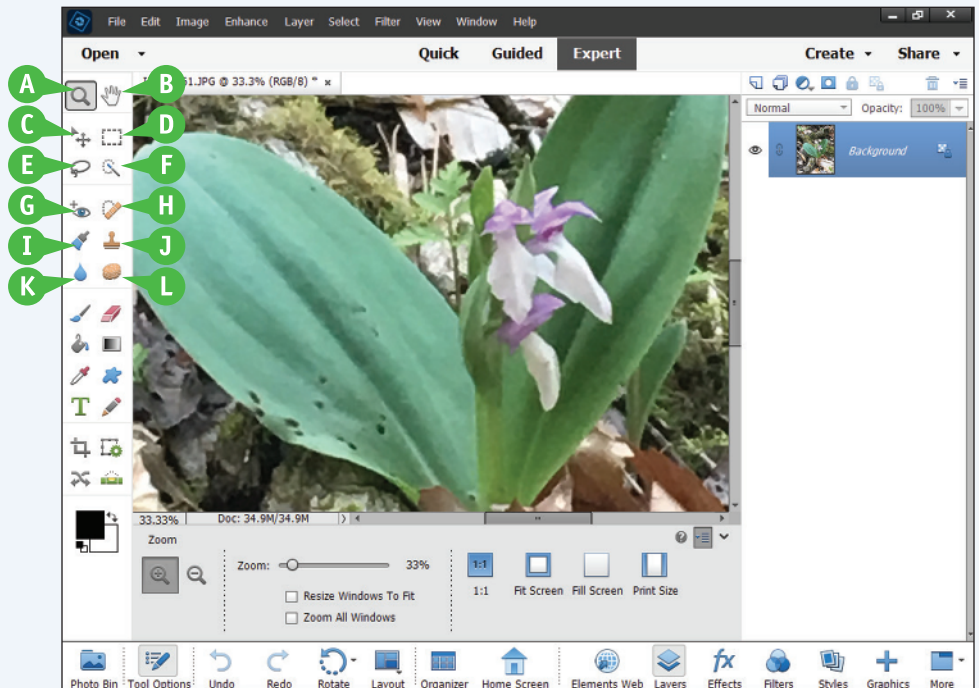
Correct red eye problems.

H Spot-Healing Brush (J)

Repair imperfections by copying nearby pixels.

I Smart Brush (F)

Select and apply a “quick fix” collection of effects.



J Clone Stamp (S)

Paint pixels from one area to another.

K Blur (R)

Blur a selection.

L Sponge (O)

Increase or decrease color *saturation* (intensity).

The toolbox doesn't have room to display all the tools at once, so some tools share a location. To toggle through the available variations of a tool, you can press its shortcut key or **Alt** + click (**Option** + click on a Mac) the tool until you see the one you want to use. Or click the desired variation at the left side of the Tool Options panel.

A Brush (B)

Paint on the image.

B Eraser (E)

Erase pixels by replacing them with the background color or making them transparent.

C Paint Bucket (K)

Fill a selection with a single color.

D Gradient (G)

Fill a selection with a blend of colors.

E Color Picker (I)

Copy a color from the image.

F Shape or Custom Shape (U)

Draw various shapes.

G Type (T)

Add text to an image.

H Pencil (N)

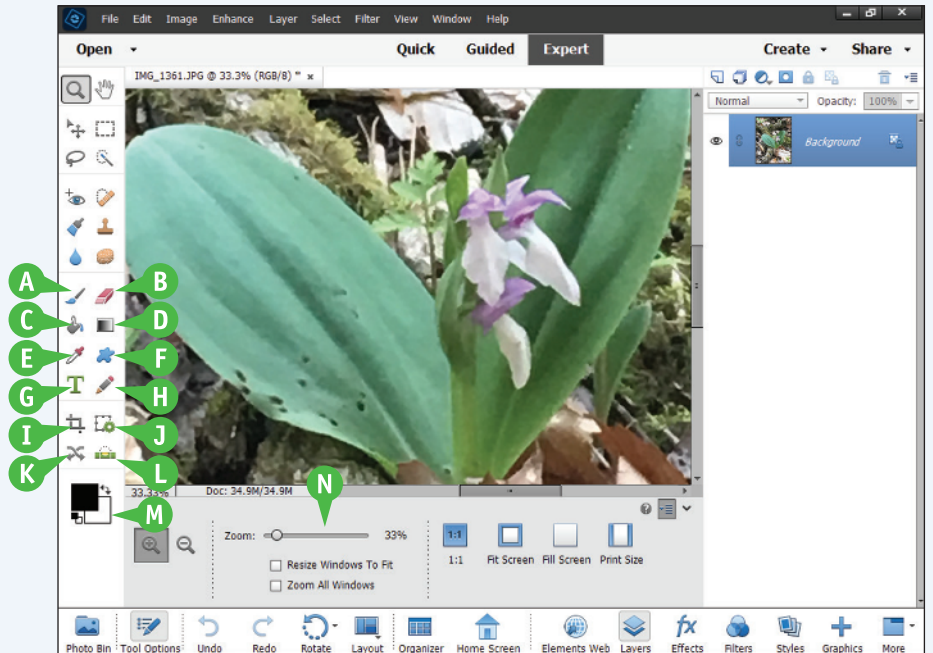
Draw hard-edged lines.

I Crop (C)

Remove unwanted parts of an image to improve it.

J Recompose (W)

Intelligently change the size of a photo while keeping elements intact.



K Content-Aware Move Tool (Q)

Move a selection and fill its old location with textures from the surrounding area.

L Straighten (P)

Straighten a crooked image or rotate it for special effects.

M Foreground and Background Color

Set the foreground and background colors used by the paint, draw, text, shape, and fill tools.

N Tool Options Panel

Display settings and options for the current tool.

Switch Editing Modes

The Photoshop Elements Editor has three modes: Quick, Guided, and Expert. Use Quick mode for simple, easy edits. This mode is perfect for beginners who are new to photo editing.

Guided mode offers step-by-step instructions for more complex edits and effects. Use it to experiment with what Photoshop Elements can do. Expert mode gives you full access to all the features in Photoshop Elements. Use it when you have more experience with the tools and feel more confident about working with them.

Switch Editing Modes

1 Open a photo in the Editor.

Note: See Chapter 2 for information about opening photos.

2 Click **Quick**.

Quick mode appears.

A Click the toolbox to select a tool.

Note: For more about tools, see the next section, “Work with Tools.”

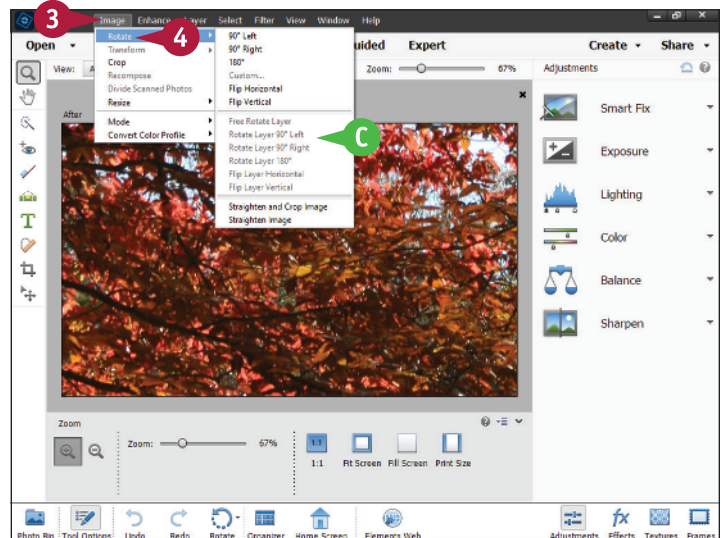
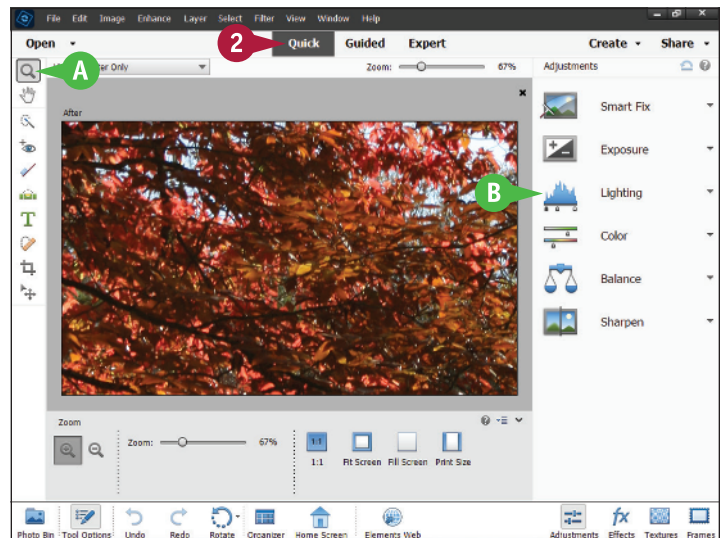
B Click here to select and apply one of the built-in quick adjustments and fixes.

3 Click a menu.

Photoshop Elements displays the menu commands.

4 Click or move the mouse pointer over a command with a triangle (▶) to display a submenu if needed.

C In Quick and Guided modes, some commands are grayed out and you cannot use them.



5 Click **Guided**.

Guided mode appears.

6 Click one of the six categories across the top.

The guided edits offered in the selected category appear.

Note: Rather than clicking a category, you can click **Search** at upper right, type a word or phrase in the text box that appears, and then press **Enter** or **Return**.

7 Click a guided edit choice.

The file and Panel Bin reappear. Follow the prompts in the Panel Bin to perform the edits.

Note: Very few tools are available in Guided mode, but the step-by-step editing suggestions include tools and settings of their own.

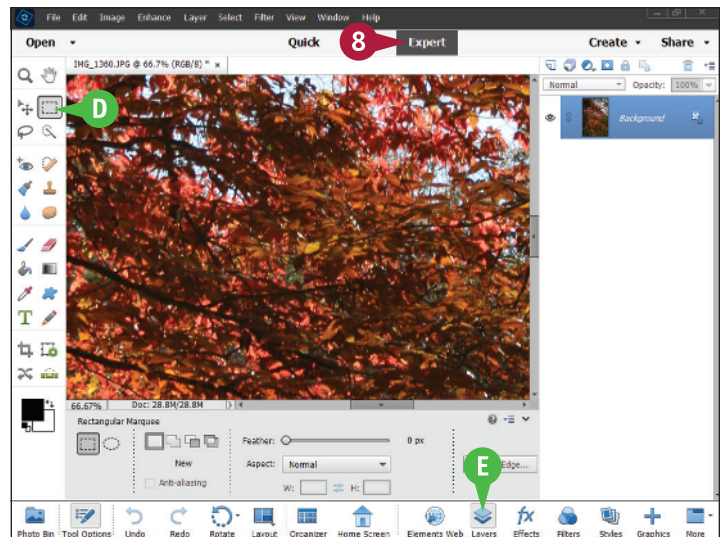
8 Click **Expert**.

Expert mode appears.

D Click a tool in the toolbox to select it.

E Click a panel button to open its panel.

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

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

In Quick mode and Guided mode, you can click the **View** menu in the upper left of the workspace. 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 **Photoshop Elements Help**, **Getting Started**, **Key Concepts**, **Support**, **Video Tutorials**, and **Forum** commands take you to the Adobe website.

Work with Tools

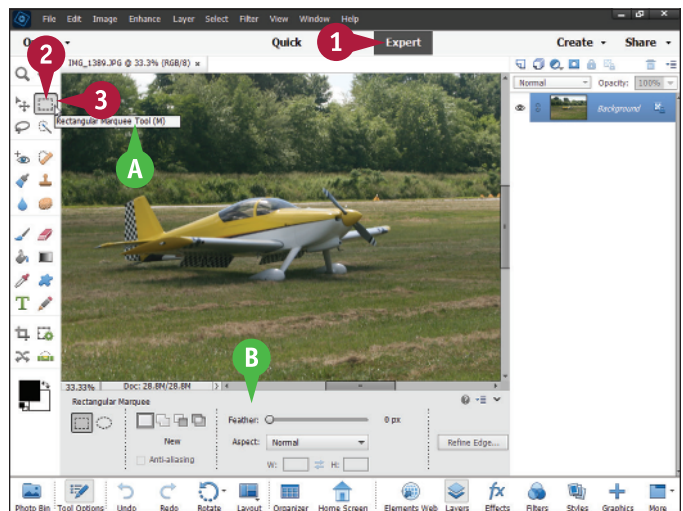
You can use the tools in Photoshop Elements to make changes to an image. After you select a tool, the Tool Options panel displays controls and settings for the tool. For example, if you select the Rectangular Marquee tool, you can set the width and height of the selection area.

Some tools display a tiny mark in the upper-right corner when you position the mouse pointer over them. This means you can select related tools by clicking a tool icon at the left side of the Tool Options panel. For example, you can click the Lasso tool icon to select two further tools: Polygonal Lasso and Magnetic Lasso.


Work with Tools

Select a Tool

- 1 Click an editing mode tab.
- 2 Position the mouse pointer over a tool.
 - A A tool tip displays the tool name and shortcut key.
- 3 Click the tool to select it.
 - B The Tool Options panel shows settings and options for the current tool.

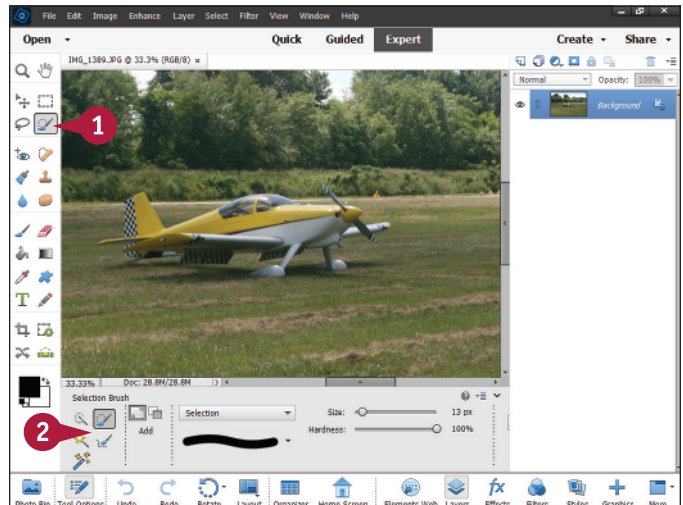


Select a Related Tool

- 1 Click a tool that has a  in the upper-right corner when you point to it.

Photoshop Elements displays the tool and any related tools in the Tool Options panel.
- 2 Click one of the related tools.

You also can press a tool's shortcut key or **Alt** + click (**Option** + click on a Mac) repeatedly to cycle through the related tools.



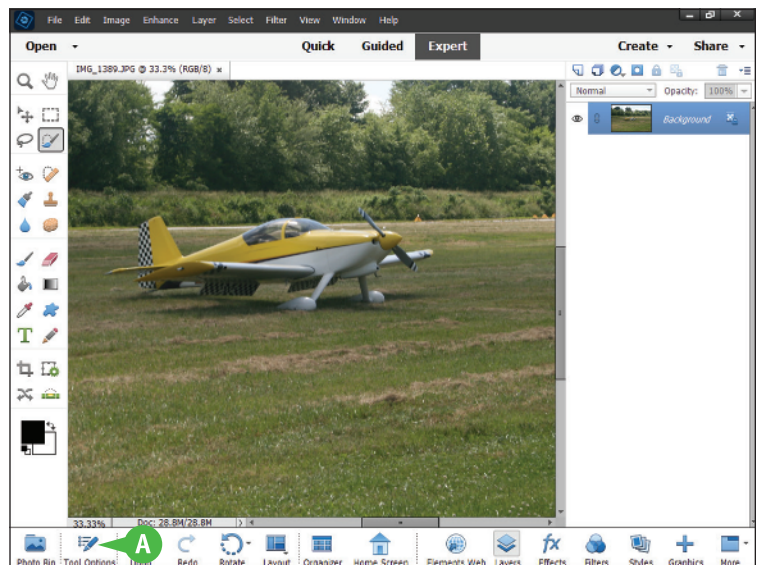
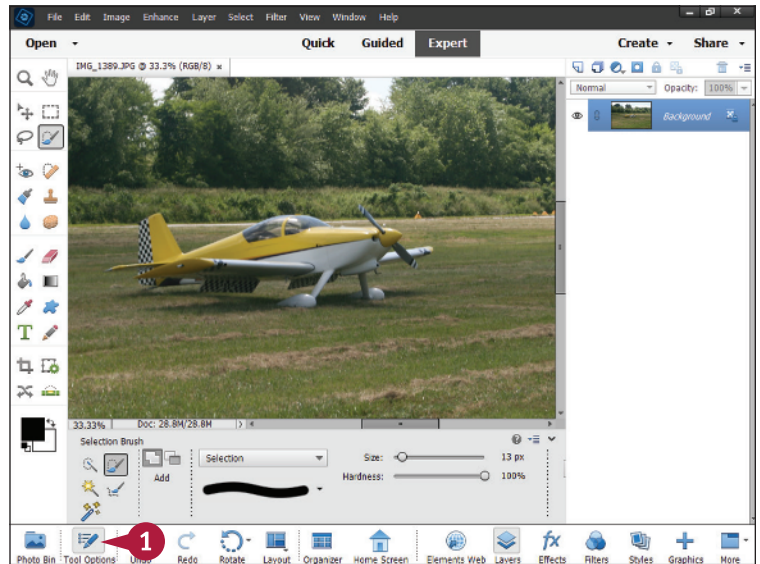
Close the Tool Options Panel

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

1 Click **Tool Options**.

The Tool Options panel closes.

A You can click **Tool Options** again to reopen the Tool Options panel.



TIPS

How can I keep the Tool Options panel hidden?

In the Tool Options panel, click the panel menu (☰) icon. By default, Auto Show Tool Options is selected, and the panel is shown when a tool is clicked. Click **Auto Show Tool Options** to deselect the option and keep the panel hidden.

How can I reset a tool to its default settings?

With a tool selected, click the panel menu (☰) icon in the Tool Options panel and then click **Reset Tool**. You can click **Reset All Tools** to reset all the Photoshop Elements tools to their default settings.

Work with Panels

In the Photoshop Elements Editor, you can open *panels* to access different Photoshop Elements features. In Expert mode, shown in this example, most panels open in the Panel Bin at the right side of the workspace. Other panels may open in a tabbed window. You can drag this window to another position, click the tabs to select different panels, and resize the window in some cases.

For example, the Layers panel shows the layers in your image, including the standard background layer available in all images. The Graphics panel displays clip art and graphics you can add to your photos.

Work with Panels

Using the Main Panels

1 Open the Photoshop Elements Editor and an image file.

Note: For more on opening the Editor, see the section “Start Photoshop Elements.” For more on opening a file, see Chapter 2.

2 Click one of the panel buttons on the taskbar.

Note: You also can open panels using the **Window** menu.

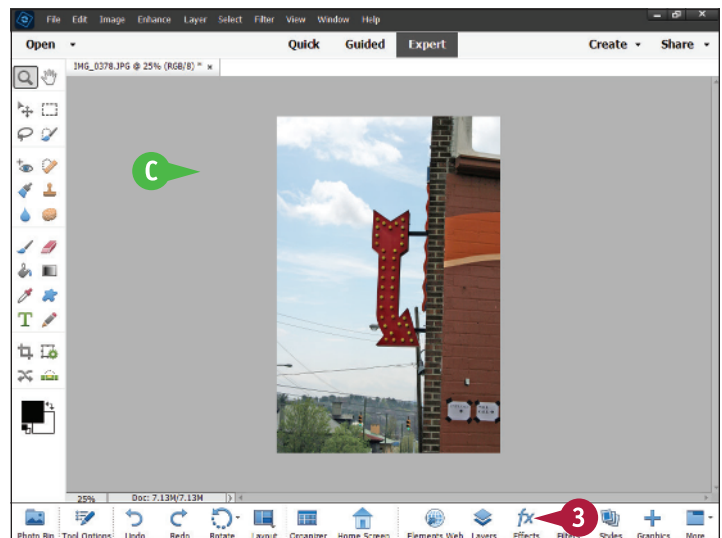
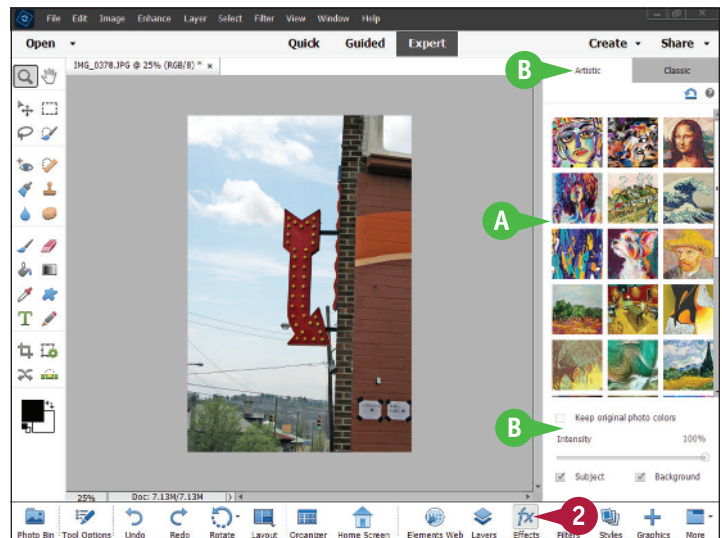
A The clicked panel opens in the Panel Bin.

B Many panels have tabs, menus, and controls for specifying further suboptions.


3 Click the panel button again.

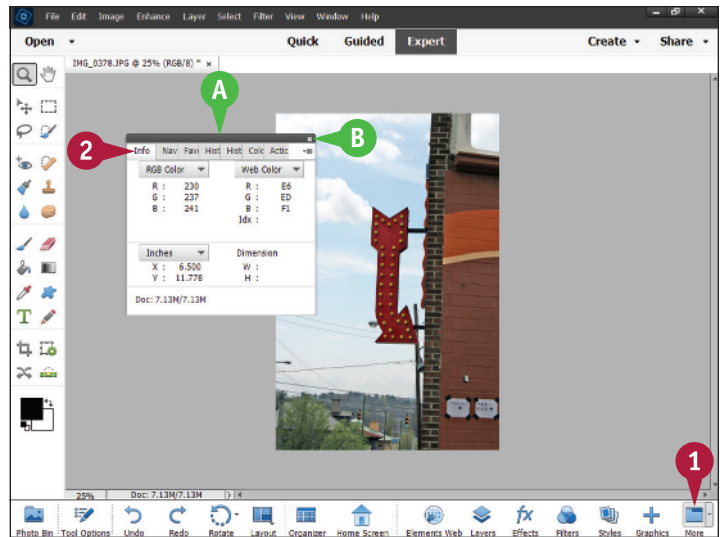
The panel closes.

C Closing the panel increases the empty space in the active image area, so you could zoom the image to a larger size if desired.



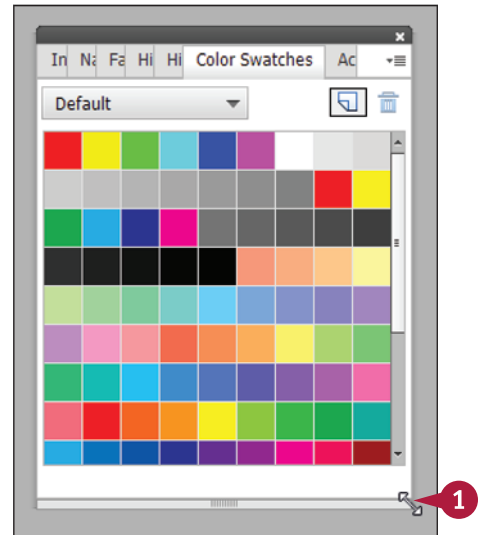
Open More Panels

- 1 Click **More**.
A window opens with tabbed panels.
 - 2 Click any tab to display a panel.
- A You can drag the panel header to move the window.
- B You can click  to close the panel window.



Resize Panels

- 1 To resize the panel window, drag the corner or edges. Not all panels in the panel window are resizable.
The panels resize.



TIPS

What do the tabs in the floating panel do?

Info shows color information for the pixel under the mouse pointer. **Navigator** is a combined zoom and drag tool. **Favorites** shows favorite effects. **History** shows a list of edits. **Histogram** graphs tonal ranges by color channel. **Color Swatches** shows color presets, known as *swatches*. **Action** shows a list of ready-made edit operations.

How do I reset my panels?

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

Set Program Preferences

You can use the Photoshop Elements Preferences dialog box to change various settings. For example, you can change image measurements from inches to centimeters or pixels, set how much memory is being used, control how many steps of Undo are remembered, and so on. You can make these changes from both the Editor and the Organizer.

Preferences are always saved to disk. Changes remain in effect even if you quit and restart Photoshop Elements. 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 2023 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.

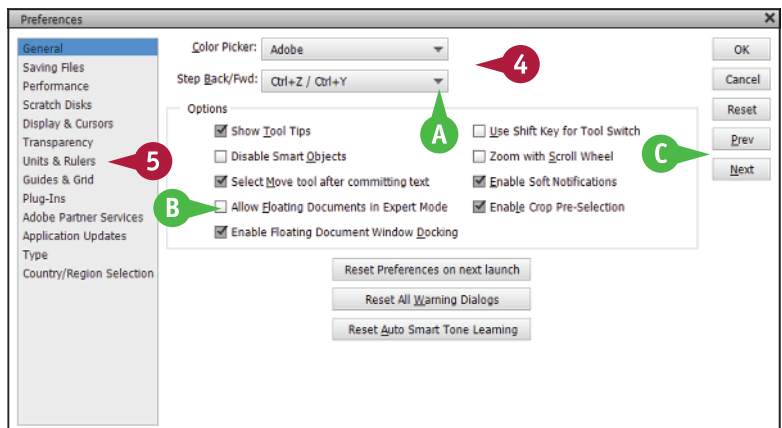
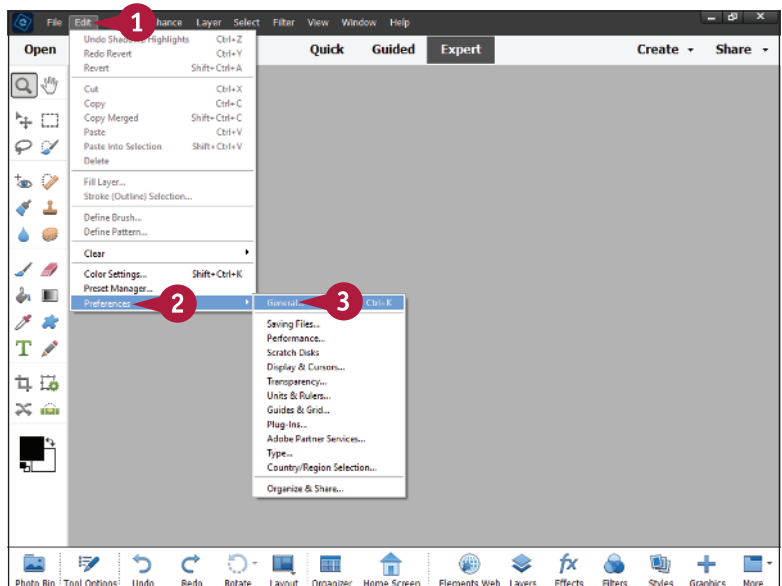
4 Select any settings you want to change.

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 any of the items in this list to select a different preference category.

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



This example shows the Units & Rulers preferences.

- 6 Select any settings you want to change.
- 7 Click **OK**.

Photoshop Elements sets the preferences.

In the Organizer

- 1 In the Organizer, repeat steps 1 to 4 in the subsection “In the Editor.”
On a Mac, click **Elements Organizer**, and then click **Preferences**. Or press **Ctrl+K** (**⌘+K** on a Mac).

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

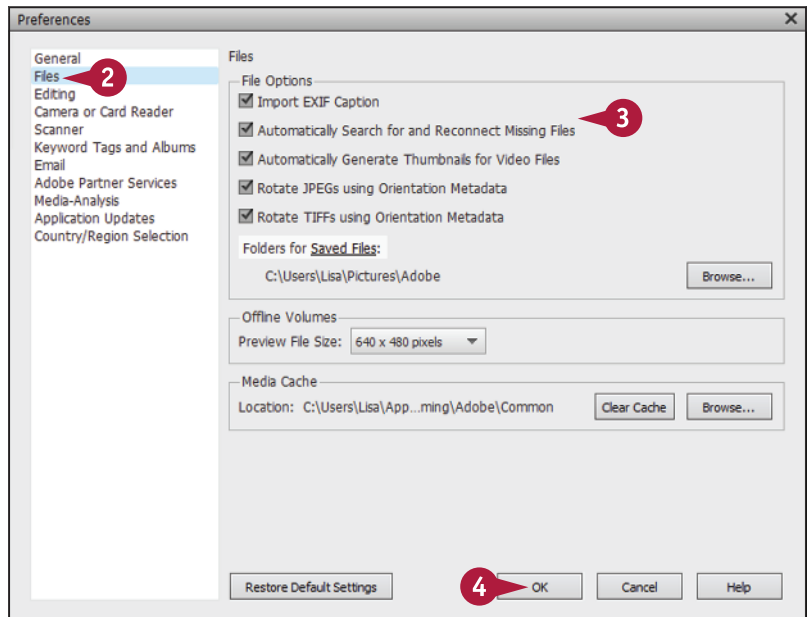
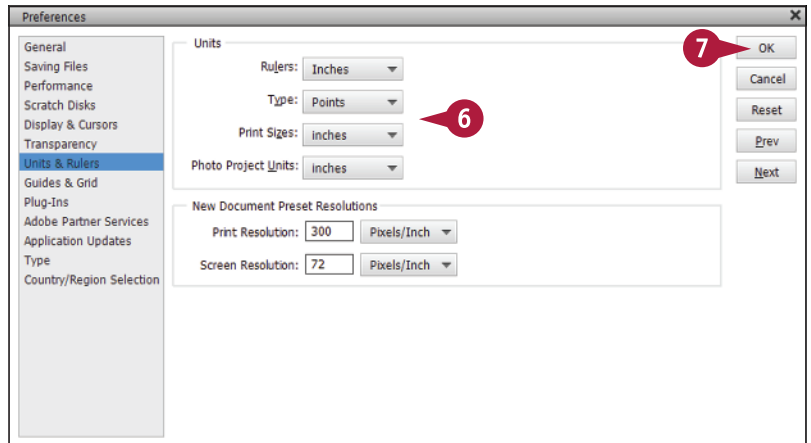
The Preferences dialog box opens.

- 2 Select any of the preference groups.

Note: The groups and the settings are not the same as the Editor preferences.

- 3 Click and change any of the settings.
- 4 Click **OK**.

Photoshop Elements sets the preferences.



TIPS

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

Typically, you use the units that match the output you want to produce. For web designs, use pixels. For print, use inches, centimeters, or millimeters. Percentage units are useful for general editing.

How do I give Photoshop Elements more memory so I can open work on more photos at once?

The Performance preferences in the Editor show how much memory, or *RAM*, you have available and how much of it Photoshop Elements is using. Use the Scratch Disks preferences to use disk space instead of *RAM*.

View Rulers and Guides

In Expert mode, you can turn on rulers and guides. Use rulers to measure widths and heights in your image. To change the units of measurement, see the previous section, “Set Program Preferences.”

Guides are horizontal or vertical lines. You can add them in the Editor active image area to help you line up elements in your image. You can see guides only as you edit. They do not appear in printed images or in images saved for sharing.

View Rulers and Guides

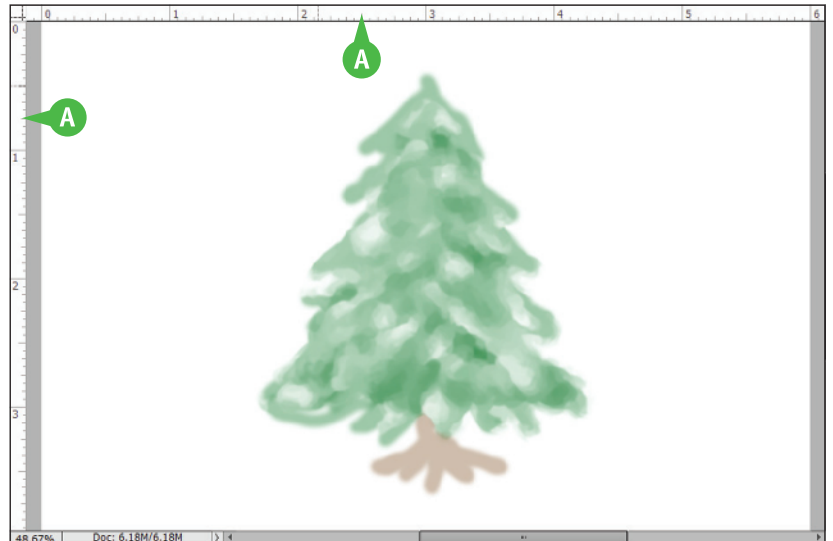
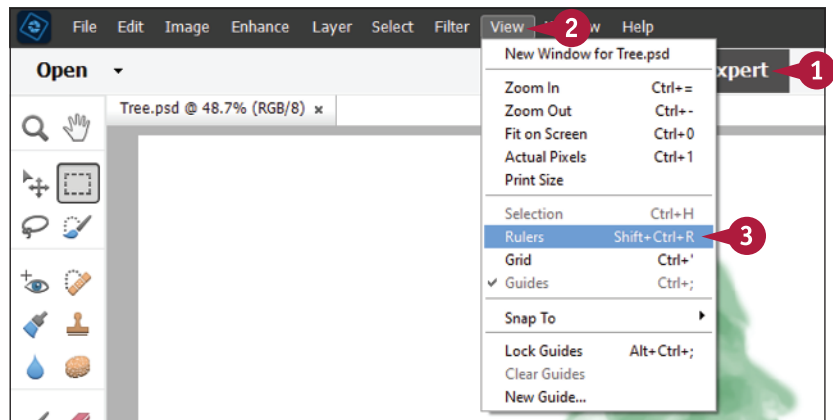
Show Rulers

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

You also can press **Shift + Ctrl + R** (**Shift + ⌘ + R** on a Mac).

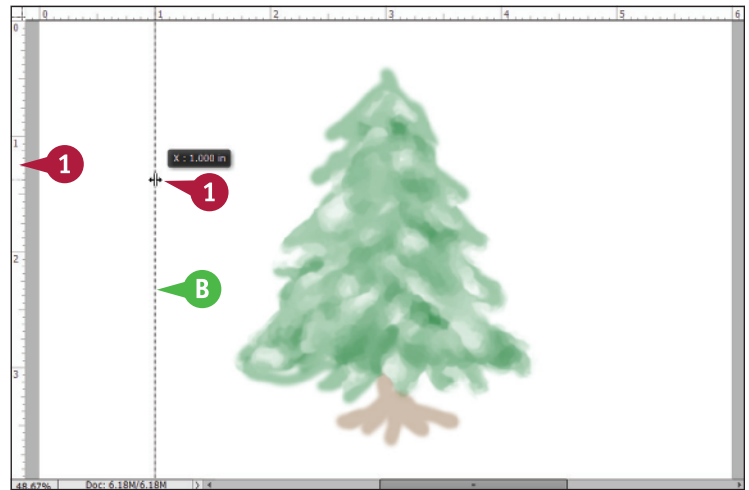
- A** Photoshop Elements adds rulers to the top and left edges of the active image area.

Note: The left and top of the image always line up with 0 on the rulers.



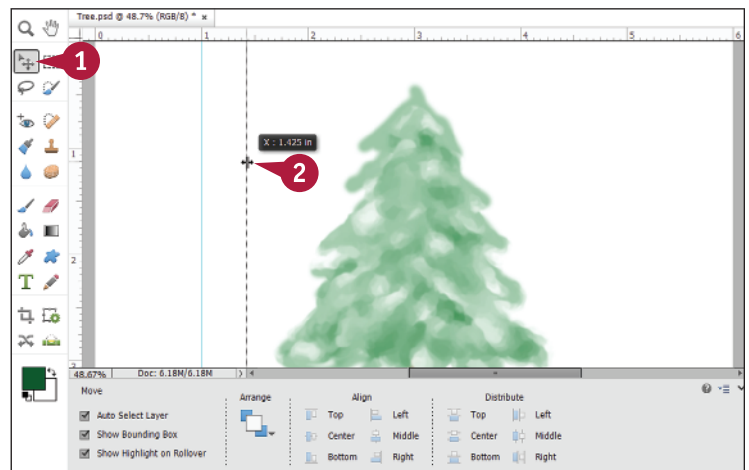
Create a Guide

- 1 Move the mouse pointer over one of the rulers, and drag the mouse pointer into the window (the mouse pointer changes to H).
- Drag from the top ruler down to create a horizontal guide.
- Drag from the left ruler to the right to create a vertical guide.
- B A thin, colored line appears.
- You also can click **View** and then **New Guide** to add a guide at a precise position.



Move a Guide

- 1 Click the **Move** tool (H).
 - 2 Position the mouse pointer over a guide (the mouse pointer changes to H), and then drag.
- Photoshop Elements shows the guide position from the top or left of the image as you drag.
- You also can 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.



TIPS

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. Click **View**, **Snap To**, and then **Guides**. When you move an object near a guide, Photoshop Elements snaps it — pulls it — to the guide. Select **Document Bounds** to snap elements to the edges of a photo, and select **Layers** to snap to layer positions. Turn the “snap to” choices off if you want to place elements by hand without automatic alignment.

Do guides work across layers?

Guides are for display only. They do not change an image or a layer. If you are working with layers, guides remain visible on top of the layer stack. For more about layers, see Chapter 4.