

# photokaboom

## Learn Photography

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## Photoshop Elements > Best Practices

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Here's a collection of the things that make editing go more smoothly.

Beginners should skim through the topics and come back periodically.

If you're retouching faces, go to [Retouching Tips](#), as well.

### 1 - Save

Photoshop Elements may crash.

Save as you work.

After you make the [Background copy](#), save the photograph as a Photoshop file (.psd).

Thereafter, periodically press Ctrl + s.

### 2 - Global → Local → Global

What do you do first, second, and third?

#### Global

Generally, make global changes first, such as:

- Levels.
- Color corrections.

#### Local

Then, make local changes, such as:

- Burning and dodging.
- Spot Healing Brush tool
- Healing Brush tool.

#### Global

Finish with a more global changes, such as:

- Sharpening.
- Noise reduction.
- [Smooth Skin](#).

For more detail, follow the workflow guidelines.

There are many links to articles and tutorials about each workflow step.

Go to [Workflow](#).

### 3 - Zoom

#### Zoom In

If you're editing part of the photograph, zoom in to that part.

When the Zoom tool is on + in [options bar/Tool Options](#), you can click, hold, and drag out a box on the part that you're editing.

#### Zoom Out

When finished, always zoom out (Ctrl + 0) to check how your editing looks.

What looks good up close, can look bad when seen with the entire photograph.

Let's say you magnify the eyes on a portrait.

You lighten them.

Isolated from the rest of the face, the lighter eyes look good.

But, when you reduce the magnification to see the entire face, the eyes are now too light in relation to the face.

So, go back-and-forth with the magnification to check your retouching.

Or, do the following.

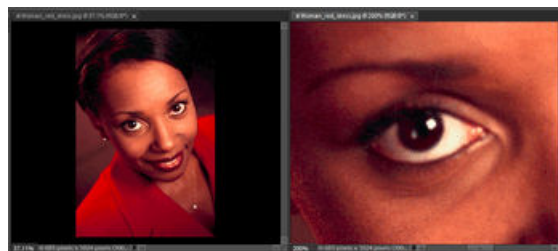
### 4 - See Both at the Same Time

You can open a second window for a photograph.

One window is fit to the screen.

You can see the entire photograph.

The image in the second window is zoomed in to where you're editing.



As you edit, you can see the effect in both windows.

Do the following.

- 1) Press Ctrl + k to go to Preferences.
- 2) Select Allow Floating Documents in Expert Mode.

Allow Floating Documents in Expert Mode

- 3) Go to View > Open new Window.
- 4) Enlarge the image in one of the windows.

### 5 - Do It on a Separate Layer

If appropriate, do your editing on separate layers.

#### When?

#### After Making a Selection

If you've selected part of your photograph, consider copying this area to a separate layer.

Press Ctrl + j.

### **Before Using the Clone Stamp & Healing Brush Tools**

If you're going to use the Clone Stamp tool or the Healing Brush tool, [create a blank layer](#).

The cloned/healed pixels will be placed on the blank layer if:

- You select the blank layer.
- Sample All layers is selected in [options bar/Tool Options](#).

### **Advantages of Separate Layers**

By placing the retouching on a blank layer, you can do the following.

#### **Opacity**

You can reduce the opacity of the blank layer to reduce the effect of the retouching that's on the layer.

Reducing the opacity allows some of the unretouched Background copy layer to be visible.

The mixture of unretouched and retouched can create a more realistic result.

#### **Erase**

You can erase a portion of the retouching on the blank layer by using the Eraser tool.

#### **Delete**

If it's a mess, delete the blank layer and start over.

#### **Change the Blending Mode**

You can change the blending mode for the blank layer from Normal to a different one.

For example, the Luminosity blending mode will block the color information.

Only the tonal information will be visible.

If you're new to blending modes, go to [Blending Modes](#).

#### **Resize**

You can resize the pixels on the blank layer with the [Free Transform Tool](#).

#### **Modify with Adjustment Layers**

You can change the retouching on the blank layer with an adjustment layer.

- 1) Make sure the blank layer is active (highlighted).
- 2) [Create a Levels adjustment layer or a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer](#).
- 3) Press Ctrl + g to group the adjustment layer with the blank layer.

When grouped, the adjustment layer will only affect the retouching on the blank layer.

If you haven't already done so, go to [How to Group](#).

#### **Make a Mask**

You can paint a mask with the Brush tool, with black, to block the effect of the adjustment layer, from part of the blank layer.

## **6 - Rename Layers**

Layers multiply quickly.

Soon, you don't know which one is which.

Go to [Rename Layers](#).

## 7 - Compare

Compare what you've done.

### Compare the Original To the Edited Version

You can compare the original to the edited version three ways.

The optimum way is the side-by-side method below.

#### Side-by-side

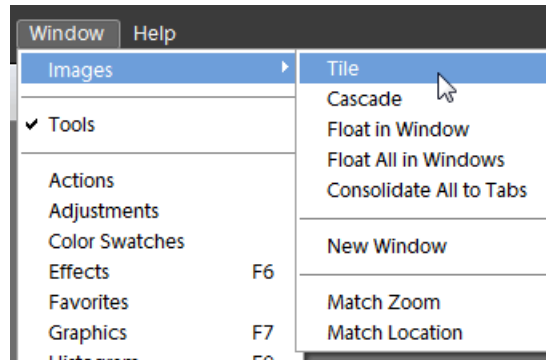
Do the following.

1) Go to File > Duplicate.

2) Click OK.

Photoshop Elements will append copy to the file name.

3) Go to Window > Images and make a selection, such as Tile.



4) Be sure to do your editing on the original, not on the copy.

#### BTW

Don't use View > New View, as this merely opens the photograph, not a copy, in a second window.

Because it's not a copy, changes you make to the original also appear in the new window for the original.

### Compare the Last Edit To the Previous Edit

It's a must—compare your editing with what came before.

Do **one** of the following.

#### Eye Icon

Select and deselect the eye icon on the layer to see the effect of the layer.

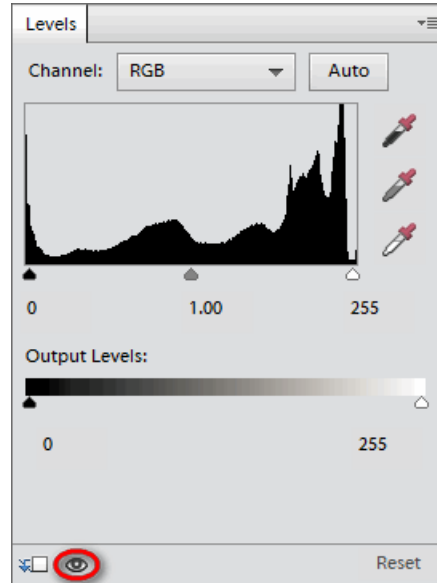
#### Undo/Redo

Press Ctrl + z to undo a change, and Ctrl + y to redo the change.

When using a Mac, press Cmd + z and Cmd + Shift + z, to undo and redo.

### Eye Icon in Adjustments Panel

When using an adjustment layer, select and deselect the eye icon at the bottom of the Adjustments panel.



Eye Icon

### Error Message

If something isn't working, or if you get an error message, check the layers stack on the right side of your screen.

The problem is usually due to the wrong layer being selected.

If the problem isn't there, check in [options bar/Tool Options](#) above your photograph.

### Combine All of the Layers

You can create a [composite layer](#) that's a combination of all of the layers.

The layers are still there, with the composite layer on top of the stack.

Use the composite layer for sharpening, noise reduction, making a black-and-white version of the photograph, and so forth.

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