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Photoshop Elements > Brushes >

Feathered Brush

Feathering aka hardness

A feathered brush produces an edge that goes from solid "paint" out to less.

Feathering is measured as a percentage.

The hardness of a brush is the percentage of feathering.

A brush with a hardness of 0% has the most feathering.

A brush with a hardness of 100% has no feathering.

Change the Hardness

You can change the hardness in [options bar/Tool Options](#).

Hardness can also be changed by increments of 25% on the keyboard.

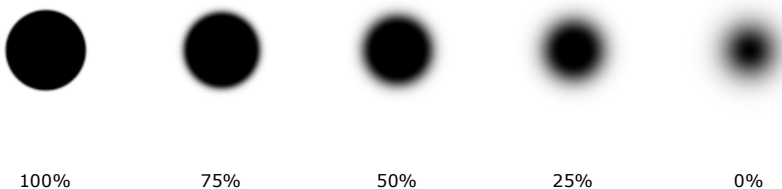
Shift + [= Decrease by 25%

Shift +] = Increase by 25%

The advantage of the latter method is that you can see the brush cursor change as to press Ctrl + [or].

However, you have to make a change in Preferences, which will be described [below](#).

Here is a 50 px brush at different hardness percentages.



Here are brush strokes of the 50 px brush at different hardness percentages.



100%



75%



50%



25%



0%

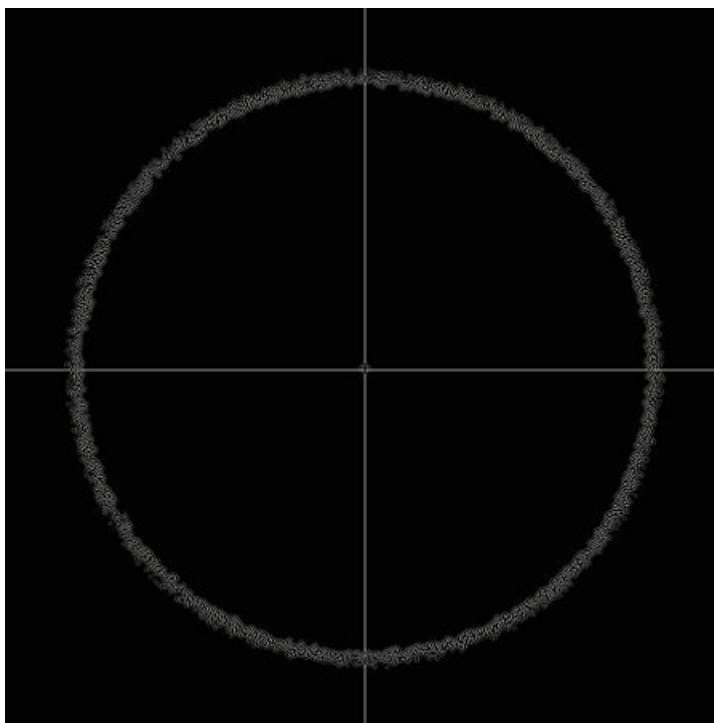
Enable the Brush Cursor Circle To Show the Hardness Percentage

When you press Shift + [or], you can't see the hardness change.

However, if you change a setting in Preferences, you can.

The circle of the brush cursor becomes more-and-more mottled as the hardness goes from 100%, none, to 0%, maximum feathering.

Below, the brush cursor shows the mottling due to the hardness of 0%, maximum feathering.



Change the Cursor Size

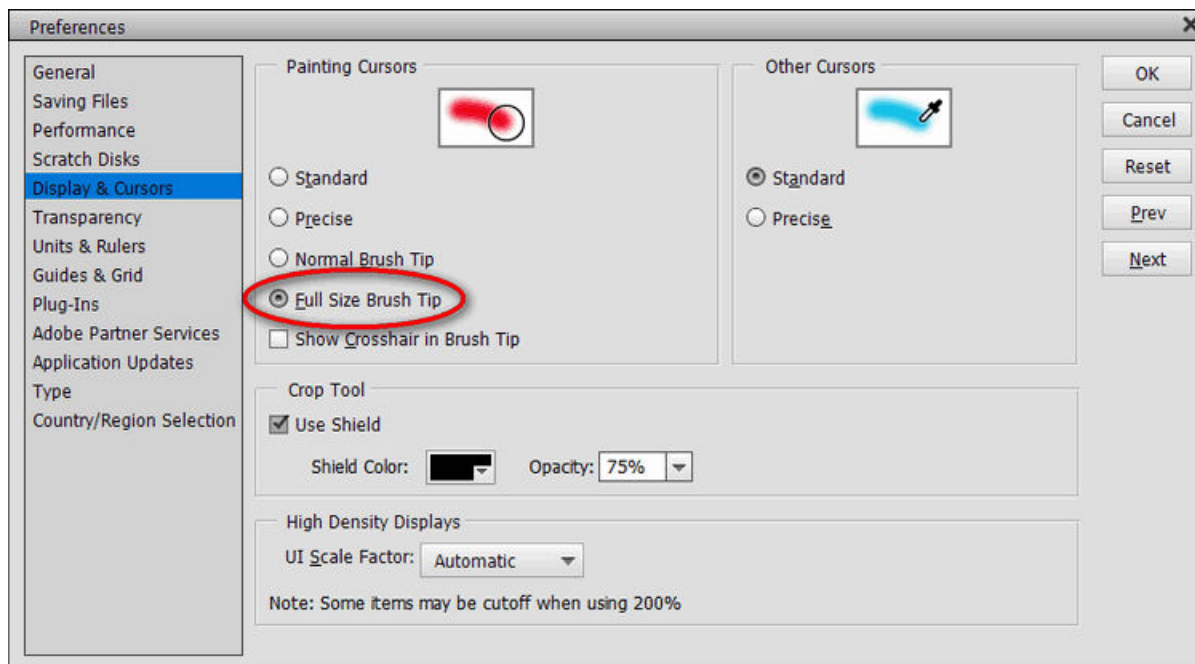
By default, the size of the brush cursor is 50% of the size of the brush.

Change the cursor size to 100%.

Then, you'll be able to see the mottled edge when the brush is feathered.

Do the following.

- 1) Go to Edit > Preferences (Windows) or Photoshop Elements > Preferences (Mac).
- 2) Click, on the left side, Display & Cursors.
- 3) In the Painting Cursors section, select Full Size Brush Tip.



Summary

As you press Shift + [or], to change the hardness, the brush cursor will be:

- Solid if the edge of the brush doesn't have any feathering.
- More mottled, as the feathering goes from 100%, none, to 0%, maximum feathering.

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