

photokaboom

Learn Photography

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Photoshop Elements >

Cropping >

Square & Rectangular - Crop Tool

You can use the Crop tool to crop your photograph with a square or rectangular shape.



Be sure to check off as you go along.



Preparation

- 1) Preserve your original file.

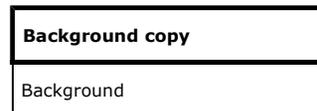
If you haven't already done so, go to [Preserve Your Original File](#).

- 2) Create a Background copy layer.

If you haven't already done so, go to [Create a Background Copy Layer](#).

No Restriction

- 3) Make sure the Background copy is active (highlighted).

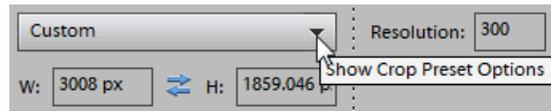


- 4) Select the Crop tool.

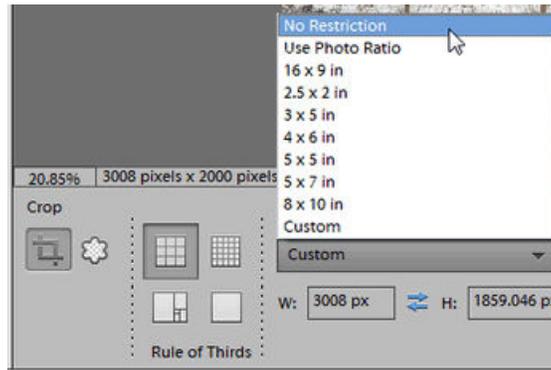


Crop Tool

- 5) In [options bar/Tool Options](#), click the Show Crop Preset Options menu.



Select No Restriction.



- 6) Click, hold, and drag to create the crop marquee.

The area outside the marquee darkens.

This area is called the shield.

Press / to return the shield area to the normal density (exposure).



Commit or Cancel

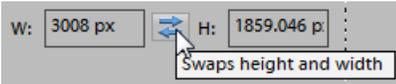
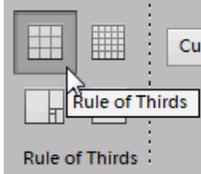
- 7) Click the green check mark, or press Enter, to commit the cropping.

To cancel, click the red circle-with-diagonal, or press Esc.



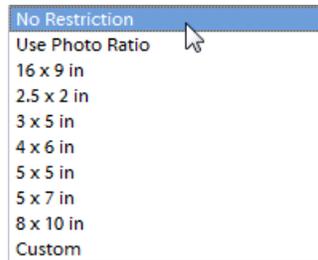
Fine Tune

Here are several ways you can fine tune your use of the crop tool.

<p>Change from landscape to portrait, or vice versa</p>	<p>Click the blue double arrows in <u>options bar/Tool Options</u>.</p> 
<p>View an overlay</p>	<p>In <u>options bar/Tool Options</u>, you can add an overlay to the cropped area.</p> <p>Consider using the <u>Rule of Thirds & Grid Lines</u> when cropping.</p> 
<p>Make a square</p>	<p>To make a square, press and hold Shift.</p> <p>Then click, hold, and drag the marquee.</p>
<p>Drag from the center out</p>	<p>The center is where you place the cursor.</p> <p>Press and hold Alt, to draw the marquee from the center, outward.</p> <p>You can combine Alt with Shift to draw a square from the center.</p>
<p>Move the marquee</p>	<p>Use the arrow keys to move the marquee.</p> <p>Or, click inside the marquee, hold, and drag it.</p>
<p>Change the size of the marquee</p>	<p>There are two ways you can change the size of the marquee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Click, hold, and drag the handles on the corners and sides of the marquee. <p>If you press Shift, and click, hold, and drag one of the corner handles, the aspect ratio of the marquee is maintained.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Enter dimensions in the Width and Height boxes in <u>options bar/Tool Options</u>.
<p>Check the dimensions of the marquee</p>	<p>Open the Info panel to see the exact dimensions of the marquee.</p> <p>Look for W and H.</p> <p>To change to inches from pixels, or vice versa, go to <u>Preferences</u>.</p>
<p>Rotate the marquee</p>	<p>The marquee can be rotated by placing the cursor in the area outside the marquee.</p> <p>The cursor will change to a curved, two-sided, arrow.</p> <p>Click, hold, and drag.</p> <p>Click the green check mark.</p> <p>The angle of the rotation is shown in the Info panel.</p>
<p>Can't make the marquee the correct size</p>	<p>Photoshop Elements may place an invisible grid on your photograph.</p> <p>As you draw the crop marquee, it may jump away from the position that you've selected.</p> <p>This is a feature called snap to grid.</p> <p>To see the grid, go to View > Grid.</p> <p>To turn off the feature, go to View > Snap To > Grid.</p> <p>To change the grid values, do the following.</p> <p>Go to Edit > Preferences > Grid (Windows) or Photoshop Elements > Preferences > Grid (Mac).</p>
<p>Change the shield</p>	<p>As described, the shield is the area outside the crop marquee.</p> <p>You can change the color and density (exposure) of the shield, and can turn the feature on or off.</p> <p>To change the shield, do the following.</p> <p>Go to Edit > Preferences > Display & Cursor (Windows) or Photoshop Elements > Preferences > Display & Cursor (Mac).</p>

Other Aspect Ratio Choices

Above, in [options bar/Tool Options](#), No Restriction was selected.



Here's a description of the other choices.

If you haven't already, go to [Aspect Ratios](#).

Use Photo Ratio

If you select Use Photo Ratio, the marquee will have the same aspect ratio as your photograph.

Preset Sizes

If you're going to print your photograph on a certain size paper, select the size of the paper.

Custom Sizes

You can enter values into the Width and Height boxes in [options bar/Tool Options](#).

Saving the Photograph

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

Other Shapes

Go to [Cropping - Circles & Ovals](#)