



Bramhall Photographic Society

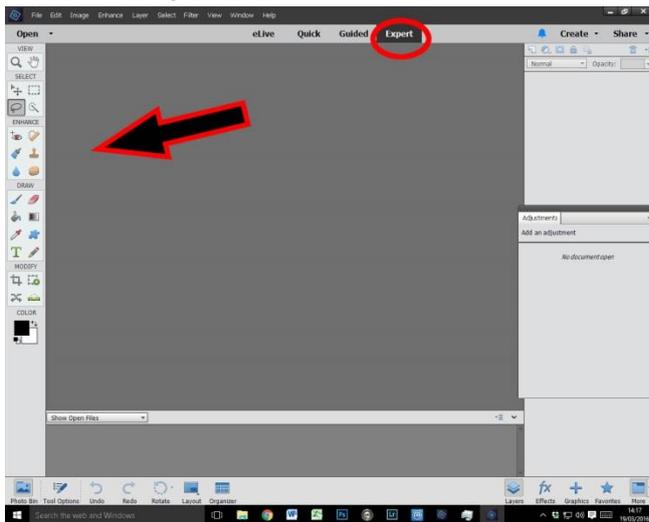
PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSPACE

(This technique will work in any version of Elements although the screenshots may vary)

By now you will be familiar with the Elements Organiser, the need for Layers, Selections and Masks. You have seen how to make full and partial Adjustments and how to use some of the tools. This session is designed for you to get the best out of the Advanced Tools showing you when, why and how to use them.

1. Advanced Tools

The tools palette is found on the left-hand side in Expert mode.



The Advanced Tools are loosely grouped into “View” “Select” “Enhance” “Draw” and “Modify” and just underneath there are a couple of squares that are normally black & white. It’s probably the programme designer being overly helpful in making these groups so don’t get hung up on the idea that they are grouped and we will look at them individually. Starting at the top and working down – so starting with the magnifying glass.

1.1

This is the “Zoom tool”. Click on it and down at the bottom of the screen the Zoom tools options are displayed. You would use this if you want to inspect closely part of your picture (+Zoom) or (-Zoom) if you want to return to normal size or create a bit more space around the edge of your photograph. Select the magnifying glass in the tools options with the + or – signs to Zoom in or out by clicking on the image. Or click and drag the zoom slider. Don’t bother with the 2 little check boxes below the slider just make sure that they are not checked. Why? Because you already have enough controls on your zoom including the set “Fit

Screen” and “Fill Screen” just to the right. AND just in case you want more the quick key method is to hold down the Ctrl (CMD on a Mac) key and press the + or – key. This procedure can be used at any time no matter what tool is active. Zoom tool leads us nicely on to -

- 1.2 The Hand Tool. This also comes with its own zoom options and is used when the photograph is zoomed on screen and you want to look at a part of the image that is off screen. Click and drag with the hand tool selected and you can push your photograph around on screen. Don't worry about the “Scroll all Windows” checkbox I have never found a use for it. You can also access the hand tool at any time without selecting it from the Tools option palette. There is a so called short cut – hold the space bar on the key board down and the curser pointer will change to a hand. Keep holding the space bar down, click and drag with the mouse and your picture will move about. This procedure can also be used at any time no matter what tool is active
- 1.3 The Move Tool. Incidentally you can see the names of all these tools by pointing your mouse at them and a little pop up label appears. The move tool does exactly what its name implies – it moves things around. At this stage there are a lot of options shown in the options box. Are we going through them all one by one? No, we ignore all of them – leave them as they are. They do have a use but most of you will never need them selected in any way other than the default. The main purpose of the move tool is to move Layers, selections etc. around. Demonstrated by selecting the second layer I have turned on. With the Move Tool selected click on the screen where the layer you wish to work with is positioned. Click once on it and a “Bounding Box” is shown. This can be used to change the scale/size of the layer by dragging one of the square handles in or out. Click anywhere inside the box away from any handles and you can move the layer into a new position. Once you are happy with the size and position click on the green tick. Click off the layer to get rid of the bounding box. These instructions assume that all three square boxes on the left are ticked to enable them.
- 1.4 Rectangular/Elliptical Marquee Tool. Called the Rectangular or Elliptical Marquee Tool because it defaults to which of the two you last used. Change it to the one you want in the options box. However, I won't spend much time on this as Heather covered the basics in the last session. What is important is that in both the Rectangular option and the Elliptical one is that you cannot just add to your selection you can

“Transform” it. Having made your ellipse and created the “Marching ants” go to the File menu (top bar) and click on “Select”/”Transform Selection” and a bounding box will appear that allows you to click on handles to change the size and shape of your selection. You can make it a flatter ellipse or a circle. Click the green tick to accept the change. If you intend to make your original selection a square rather than a rectangle or a circle rather than an ellipse hold the shift key down before you click and drag to make the selection. Remember to think – do I need to feather this selection?

- 1.5 Lasso, Polygonal Lasso, Magnetic Lasso (forget this one) Tools. Again Heather demonstrated this last time but if there are questions I am happy to answer them. Ditto for the “Quick Selection” & “Magic Wand Selection” tools.
- 1.6 Red Eye Removal Tool. This is where the earlier instruction on zoom and hand tools is useful. Use both to ensure you can clearly see the eyes at a decent size. In many cases it’s sufficient to single click on the Auto Correct option. Usually does a good job but can make the pupil too dark. If this is the case just below you will find the “Undo” option, click on it to reset the red eye. Now slide the “Darken” slider to about 30% and click on the red part of the eye. If not perfect repeat the process with undo until you find a level of darken that you are happy with. Same applies to the “Pupil Radius” slider if the entire red eye isn’t covered. Pet Eye is exactly what it says. Some animals will show green, yellow and other colours where we show red eye. Check this box if you are working on a pet picture and proceed as described for red eye.
- 1.7 Spot Healing Brush Tool. Very useful tool for getting rid of distractions, imperfections and anything you don’t want. (Unfortunately only works in Photoshop and not in life). The only thing you need to change with the options for the Spot Healing brush is the brush size. You need a brush size slightly bigger than what you want to remove. If this is a line or a pole this guidance refers to its width not its length or height. Generally a soft edge brush works better than a hard edge one but the default is a soft one so no need to change it. The “Healing Brush” does very much the same but with more effort from you – stick to the Spot healing Brush and the “Content Aware” Option.
- 1.8 Clone Stamp Tool. Whilst we are looking at modifying



pixels let's look at the main 'Clone'tool. The 'Pattern Stamp' can largely be left alone unless you want to play with it. The Clone Stamp tool and the Spot Healing Brush should be considered as a set of twins but not identical ones. They both do a similar job but not in the same way so sometimes one does a better job than the other. Select the Clone Stamp tool, duplicate the layer, adjust brush size to fit the task, enlarge image to give you good detail. Find the area you want to clone from, press and hold down the Alt key at the same time as clicking on the mouse. The target area can now be 'painted over with the new (selected area). The Spot Healing Brush & the Clone Stamp Tool are the main tools used in retouching old photographs. It's a case of trial and error to establish which tool is the most effective for each edit.



- 1.9 Smart Brush & Detail Smart Brush. These are very powerful tools and can be used with subtlety or you can go loopy with all in-between. The basic purpose is to apply edits and/or effects directly to parts of the photograph. But at the same time creating a new layer. It's not used significantly by photo editors who require precise influence on their artistic transformations but it's worth describing. The first bit of the options panel is where you choose standard or detail brush. Moving right is a small thumbnail picture with a dropdown triangle next to it. Here you select what you want to do to your image. Click on the dropdown and a small window appears with another dropdown triangle. Click on this new triangle and a complete set of adjustments and effects options are listed. Point the cursor at them and a pop up label tells you what each one is for. If the pop up label doesn't appear you can change the readout to 'list'. The 'Smart Brush' behaves in a similar way to the 'Quick Selection' tool and adds the requested effect to the selected area on a new layer. The 'Detail Smart Brush' paints in the selected effect to the brushed area.
- 1.10 The penultimate Enhance tool is a group: - 'Sharpen, Blur and Smudge'. Select the one shown and choose which one you want to use from the tools options palette. They all work directly on the area brushed you select the brush size to suite and the strength to apply. The default

strength is 50% and it's a good starting point. As always it's best to work on a duplicate layer. There are better ways of sharpening an image so concentrate on 'Blur' & 'Smudge' although apart from making swirls I have found little use for 'Smudge'. They both do what their name suggests but the useful one is 'Blur'. Best use and probably the only use for 'Blur' is to soften the edge of a 'cut out' selection so that it doesn't look false.

- 1.11 Dodge, Burn and Sponge tools the last of the Enhance tools group. Easy one first – 'Sponge', forget about 'Sponge'. 'Dodge' & 'Burn' work to brighten (dodge) and darken (burn) parts of the image. To the right of the tool is a box marked as Range it either shows – Highlights, Midtones or Shadows. You select the one that you are going to dodge or burn. Set a suitable brush size for the area you are going to work on, ensure that Exposure is set to no more than 3% and as usual use a soft brush and work on a duplicate layer. Brush over the area several times to reach the level you require. Remember that this is not easy to reverse so keep checking progress by turning off and on the layer you are working on. It's also good practice before starting to dodge and burn as mentioned to duplicate the layer and name it dodge or burn depending which operation you intend to proceed with first. Do all the, for example 'Dodging' and check that you are happy with it. Then duplicate this layer and name it 'Burning'. Now proceed to carry out all the burning to this second duplicated layer. This way you can see separately the effects that the dodging and burning have achieved. Don't like it chuck away the layers and start again.

1.12 Brush tool the first of the Draw Tools. You have already seen this demonstrated so I will not dwell too long on the basic brush. There are a number of settings but the only ones to be concerned with are: - Brush but for 99% of work the default brush is the one to use. Size is obvious. Opacity you set depending on how fast you would like to build up an effect or edit. If you click on Brush Settings the only aspect to change would be hardness and there are not many times you would need a hard brush. I personally don't use Airbrush Mode and here it shows very little difference to the standard brush. Moving on to the next brush which is 'Impressionist Brush' tool – have a play with it but move on. The 'Colour Replacement Brush' tool is useful but you can use the basic brush for the same purpose. You just need to change the blending mode to



'Colour' and its best to do this with a selection made to limit where the colour goes if you need to be highly accurate. You select your new colour by either using the 'Colour Picker' tool (more later) or just click on the Black square under 'Colour' in the Tools Panel. This will open up the colour picker window where you can select a new colour by clicking on it.

- 1.13 Colour Picker Tool. Take this one out of turn as it follows on naturally. Selecting the 'Colour Picker' tool opens up the tools options and there are 3 options. The first one is 'Point Sample' the next 2 are 3x3 and 5x5. These indicate the breadth of the sample that will be picked. The one you use depends on how exact you want to be in a colour selection and how much variation is in the area you will be applying the colour. For most purposes use the 5x5 option as with the single sampler you can pick up a colour that is not obvious unless you zoom right in.
- 1.14 Eraser – exactly what it says on the tin but use it sparingly if at all as its always better to be using a mask.

- 1.15 Paint Bucket tool. Used to flood a selection with a chosen colour. Use colour picker to choose the colour. To apply the colour with the 'Paint Bucket' tool click inside the selection. It's always best to build up the effect by setting the opacity at a low level e.g. 20% and repeating the process until satisfied. Blending mode needs to be 'Colour' if detail is to be retained. Tolerance governs which colours in the selection are replaced. 32 is the default and a lower level results in fewer colours being replaced and a higher number means more in the selection will be changed. The 'Foreground Colour Fill' is the standard option but play with the 'Pattern Fill' to its right if you wish but I have never used it for anything serious.
- 1.16 Gradient Tool – I will leave for now as it's a complicated tool and will not be missed by those who are only starting out with editing photographs. We will cover this as an additional topic at a later date.
- 1.17 Shape Selection Tool (although the name shown will change depending on what shape was last selected). Used to draw a range of shapes on photographs. Selecting the tool shows the shapes available in the options palette. All except the first one have limited variants and you get what you see. The number of points on a star or sides on a polygon can be changed. Colour of the shape is also modifiable by clicking on it and picking a new one. Below the colour box is Style. Click on the dropdown triangle and choose a shadow or embossed style. Remember if you add multiple shapes each one places itself automatically on a new layer. The first shape option that looks like an ink blot has a variety of shapes under it. Clicking on it produces a box to the right where a dropdown triangle offers a window with a choice of shapes. The colour and style options are also available for these shapes. The final option is 'Line' but is in fact an arrow. Main purpose is to make graphic effects on photographs.
- 1.18 Type Tool. Of the options the first 2 are the ones used 99% of the time. 'Horizontal Type' and 'Vertical Type' tools. As you become more expert in Elements you can experiment with the others. Selecting one of them opens up several modifications including Font, the dropdown triangle reveals a multitude of fonts. Size, colour and justification can all be altered. Click on the image (anywhere it doesn't matter) and start typing. If you want to change font, size etc after you have started typing double click on the letters and change what you want. Whilst the type is selected in this way it's possible to move the type around. Or you can use the 'Move' tool but remember to have the correct layer selected. Also remember to click the green tick to confirm your changes. Additional text layers can be added by clicking on any layer other than

the text layer being edited and then clicking on the image whilst the text tool is still selected (check it is if you see no new text). It is easier to compose text lines on a page if you use several text layers on an image as each one can be moved independently. Once you have confirmed the layer the layer name changes making it easier to identify each one.

- 1.19 Pencil Tool. I cannot remember ever having used this tool. However, if you want to use it by now the options are self-evident in there characteristics.
- 1.20 Crop Tool is the first of the Modify tools. The standard 'Crop' tool can be customised by typing in your own dimensions or ratio in the 'W' and 'H' boxes. Or click on the dropdown triangle and selecting a pre-set option. 'No Restriction' means the sides can be varied with independent height and width. 'Use Photo Ratio' keeps the ratio of width and height as the original. The two main reasons for cropping a picture are to fit a frame or other mount and to modify the composition. Crop suggestions are an added function that is probably an option too far, use it as an auto option but you are best setting your own. The 'Cookie Cutter' is a bit of fun but little practical purpose – play with it yourself.
- 1.21 Recompose Tool. As Always Photoshop gives us many ways of accomplishing what we want to do. This tool lets us have another go at getting our composition tight or altering reality. Once the tool is selected we have 2 options 'Mark for Protection' (paint green) and 'Mark for Removal' (paint red). Set brush size with 'Mark for Removal' selected and paint a line vertical or horizontal over what you want to take out. Select 'Mark for Protection' and paint over the adjacent areas you don't want to lose. When brushing is complete square 'handles' will be seen at the sides, top and corners. Click and drag on one of these and recompose the image. Remember to hold the shift key down if you drag a corner handle. Use the threshold slider to improve the 'join if necessary. If it's still not perfect try the Spot Healing Brush tool over the join or the Clone Stamp Tool. You could also leave the moving process completely up to the software. However, before doing that make sure you have saved your work before the recomposing step as recomposing using the dropdown triangle that shows the default 'No Restriction' uses a lot of RAM. If your processor is a slow one or you have insufficient RAM your computer could crash or you might spend a long time waiting for it to complete the action.
- 1.22 Content-Aware Move Tool. Like the Recompose tool this is another altered reality function. First decision, what's in the wrong place? Make a selection around the target with what looks like a pair of scissors. Click on 'Create a New layer'. Make sure that the Mode is set to 'Move' and

that 'Sample all Layers' is ticked. Click inside your selection and drag it to its new position. Use the 'Healing' slider to get the best result. If it's good enough move on. If it's too obvious you have several options. Modify the selection using the range of 'Selection' tools but only where necessary by adding or subtracting from the original selection. Don't forget to modify your selection. Use Ctrl+D to turn off the marching ants. Click Mask icon to create a mask. On the Menu line Select/Reselect back to Select/Inverse and this makes outside your selection active. Click on the mask and brush out with Black the worst areas of the move residuals. For less detailed areas you can use the 'Clone Stamp' tool. Make sure that the mask is not the active window. With the 'Clone Stamp' tool selected adjust brush size to an appropriate one and that 'Sample all Layers' is ticked. Clone out any tell-tale artefacts and don't forget to check where your target was moved from. There is another option with this tool and that's 'Extend'. Make sure that your layer is active and not the mask. Change 'Mode' to 'Extend' and draw another selection. Click on it and drag into position. Use the 'Healing' slider to get the best result. And don't forget the tidying up.

- 1.23 Straighten Tool. Used to level or straighten photographs that are leaning over or slope downhill when they shouldn't. It's simple to use and there is not a lot of difference between the 3 options available. Use the middle one unless it proves unsatisfactory then try the other 2. Find something in the image that should be true horizontal or vertical. Click at one end and draw the cursor along the line and release the mouse when you have got to the end. If you have selected the left or right option you might want to see if the software can help you out by enabling the 'Auto Fill Edges' box (its magic).

That's it for my notes but if you hit a problem before you take your frustration out on the cat or monitor let me know what the problem is by e mail and I will do my best to clarify my notes for you.

Lawrence Devaney

ldevaney4@btinternet.com