



Design Solutions: Essential Skills in Adobe® Photoshop® CS4

New to Photoshop? It can be overwhelming... Here are some essential skills to get you started.

1. Image Essentials

Crop and rotate an image

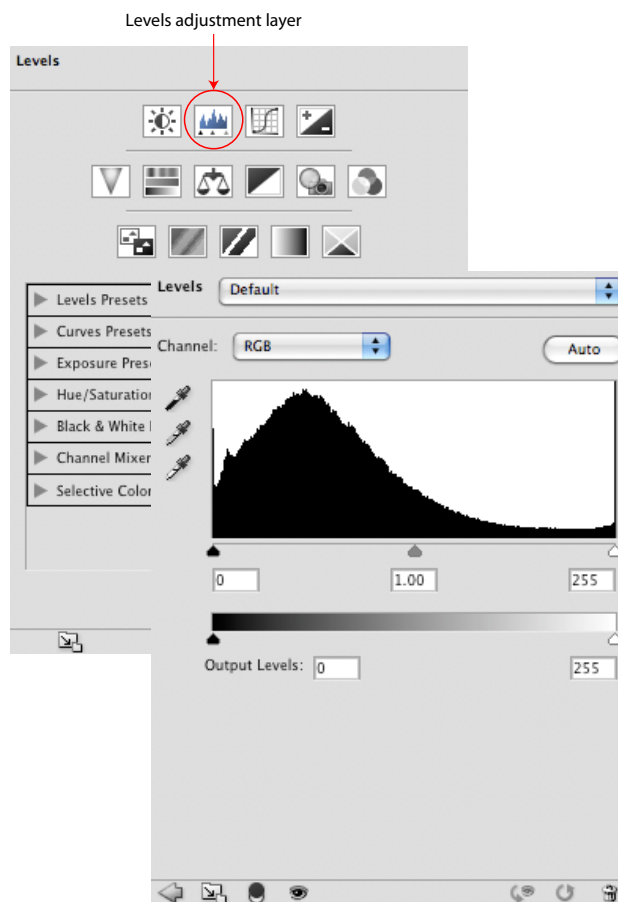
- Select the crop tool
- Drag a rectangle on the image
- Use the handles to resize the crop area
- Point slightly outside the crop handles to rotate the image
- Press Enter or click the check mark in the Options bar to apply the transformation

Adjust tonal range

- In the Adjustments panel, click to add a Levels adjustment layer
- Choose a Levels preset, or drag the black, white, and gray triangles for the input levels

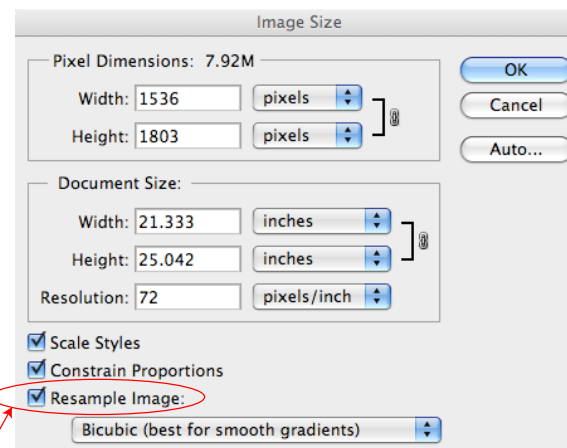
Remove a color cast

- In the Adjustments panel, click to add a Color Balance adjustment layer



Resize an image

- Choose Image > Image Size
- Determine whether Resample should be on or off. (If you want to add or remove pixels, turn resample on. If you want to leave the number of pixels the same, turn resample off.)
- Set dimensions for print, or pixel dimensions if output is monitor



Do you want to add/remove pixels or not?



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c o n s u l t i n g

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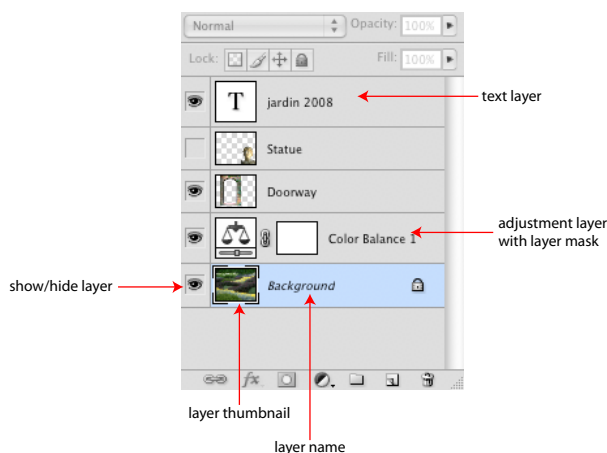
Sharpen as a final step

- Choose Filter > Sharpen > Unsharp Mask
- Be careful not to over-sharpen

2. Layer Essentials

Basic layer skills

- Target a layer (make it the active layer) by clicking once on layer thumbnail
- Show/Hide a layer by clicking on eyeball icon
- Rearrange layers: drag layer thumbnail up or down in Layers panel
- Rename a layer: double-click on layer name



- Duplicate a layer: right-click on layer name (not the thumbnail) and choose Duplicate Layer
- Make a layer more transparent by dragging the Opacity slider in the Layers panel

Move a layer

- Make the layer active by clicking once on the layer thumbnail in the Layers panel
- Select the Move tool
- Point to the image and drag

Scale and rotate a layer

- Make the layer active by clicking once on the layer thumbnail in the Layers panel
- Choose Edit > Free Transform (Ctrl + T (Windows) / Command + T (Mac OS))
- Use the handles to resize the layer
- Point slightly outside the handles to rotate the layer
- Press Enter / Return or click the check mark in the Options bar to apply the transformation

Combine images

- Open the images
- Drag the layer from one image onto the image window of the other image

Make a layer by copying /cutting a selection

- Make a selection

- Choose Layer > New > Layer via copy or Layer via cut

3. Making Selections

Selection Basics

- Make selections to isolate pixels for editing
- After working with selected pixels, choose Select > Deselect (Ctrl + D / Command + D)
- To add pixels to an existing selection, hold Shift key and click or drag
- To remove pixels from an existing selection, hold Alt/Opt key and click or drag
- Sharpen or soften the edges of a selection by choosing Select > Refine Edge.

Quick Selection tool

- Let's you "paint" a selection. Automatically grows the selection and senses defined edges
- Much of the time you can start with this tool and then use another tool to refine the selection if necessary
- Pay attention to your brush size!
- Hold the Alt/Opt key to take away from an existing selection.

Magic Wand

- Makes selections based on similar pixel color
- Click to make initial selection
- Shift-click to add to existing selection





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- Alt/Opt-click to take away from existing selection

Lasso tool

- Drag to make a freehand selection
- To add pixels to an existing selection, hold Shift key, begin inside existing selection, drag to add new area, return to start
- To remove pixels from an existing selection, hold Alt/Opt key, begin outside existing selection, drag to take away an area, return to start

Rectangular marquee/Elliptical marquee



- Drag to make selection. Hold Shift key to constrain selection to a perfect square or a perfect circle.

Polygonal Lasso

- Makes polygonal selections
- Click to begin, release mouse button, move the mouse, click to create a corner, repeat
- Return to starting point and click to close selection

Magnetic Lasso

- Makes selection based on edge contrast
- Click on contrasting edge to begin selection

- Move the mouse (don't hold mouse button down)
- Click when necessary to add points
- Return to starting point and click to close selection
- Use Backspace key to back up

4. Working with Type

Add type

- Use the Type tool
- To add type to an image, either click to create point type or drag to create a text frame.
- Adding type automatically creates a new type layer.

Move the type


- With the type highlighted move the pointer away from the type until it looks like the move tool, drag to move the type

Select type

- Double-click the type layer thumbnail

Format characters

- Select the text to be formatted
- Use the Options bar to select character attributes
- Click the color box in the Options bar to change character color

- Click the Warp Type button  to warp the type

5. Output File Types

For Web or monitor

- Choose File > Save for Web
- JPEG medium compression is usually best for traditional photographs
- GIF works well for text images, or images with solid colors

For Print

- Choose File > Save As
- PSD (Photoshop document) is Photoshop's native file format. Use PSD if sending straight to printer or placing in Adobe InDesign®
- TIFF (tagged image file format) is recognized by most image-editing and page-layout applications. Use TIFF if planning to place in QuarkXPress® or Microsoft® Word document
- Save as Photoshop PDF to make viewable using the Adobe Reader

Output tip

- Keep or request a copy of the PSD with all the layers to enable editing





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6. General Tips

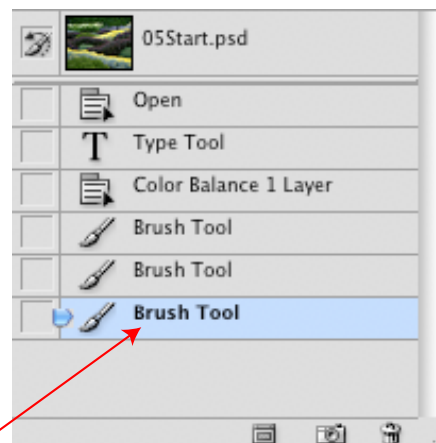
Select colors

- Click on the foreground color selection box at the bottom of the toolbox
- Reset colors to the defaults of black and white by clicking on small black and white squares to lower left of color selection boxes
- Switch foreground and background colors by clicking on curved arrows to upper right of color selection boxes



Use the History panel

- The History panel allows you to step backward, undo-ing multiple times
- Click on the name of the action, *not* on the box to the left



to step backward, click on the name of the action, *not* the box to the left

Use Filters for special effects

- Begin by choosing Filter > Convert for Smart Filters
- Choose from the Filter menu for the complete list
- Choose Filter > Filter Gallery to see a preview when applying multiple filters