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As you may or may not have read in the previous “From the Editor,” Dave Cross has passed the reigns of Editor-in-Chief over to me. I can’t tell you how excited I am to have this position. I’ve been working closely with Dave, the newsletter, and the website for more than a year and half and truly believe that we’re all part of the best Adobe Photoshop Elements community in the world.

Now, when things like this occur, many people wonder what will change. Well, I’m sure you’ve all heard the phrase, “If it’s not broken, don’t fix it.” Things couldn’t be better with the newsletter and website, so my first task is to do…well, nothing (not a bad gig, huh?). We’re at a record number of subscribers, the website is getting more traffic and has more content than ever before, and our online forum has become the largest of its kind for Adobe Photoshop Elements. I can’t imagine coming into the Editor-in-Chief position at a better time.

That said, there’s always room to make improvements and I think listening is the best way to do that. So if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, just visit our forum at www.photoshopelementsuser.com and post them there. I visit there every day because I think it’s the best way to stay in touch with you, the readers. I’m excited to see what the future holds here at Adobe Photoshop Elements Techniques, and I sincerely thank each and every one of you for helping make it all happen.

Matt Kloskowski
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YOUR LEARNING DOESN’T STOP HERE!
It continues online, where you get exclusive access to print and video tutorials, discussion forums, downloads, and a personal user gallery. It’s all part of the value-added benefits of being an Adobe Photoshop Elements Techniques newsletter and website subscriber. For this issue’s articles, HOW TO CREATE WOOD, STEEL, AND PAPER TEXTURES and UPGRADING FROM ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS TO ADOBE PHOTOSHOP CS2: SMOOTHING THE TRANSITION, visit www.photoshopelementsuser.com/subscriber/printextras.php.
Step by Step

**Photographic Techniques**

BY MATT KŁOSKOWSKI

**color variations in black-and-white**

As with many things in life, there are good ways to do things and then there are great ways. Converting a color photo to black-and-white is a perfect example. You could do it the one-click way, but to get truly great black-and-white images, you have to go beyond that. Fortunately, there’s one dialog called Color Variations that can really help us and it’s very simple to use.

**STEP ONE:** First, open the photo that you want to turn into a black-and-white. Wedding photos are great candidates, as are portraits and landscapes. You can download the photo I’m using here, as well as watch a quick video where I’ll talk more about the settings I’ve used in this tutorial at [www.photoshopelementsuser.com/subscriber/printextras.php](http://www.photoshopelementsuser.com/subscriber/printextras.php).

**STEP TWO:** Now, you could just take the easy way out by going to the Enhance menu and choosing Adjust Color>Remove Color. Yep, you sure could; but that would leave you with a rather dull-looking image. Take a look at the results of the “not-so-good” way I just described compared to the “really nice” way. As you can see, the latter has a lot more punch to it. Look at all the detail and contrast you can see in the trees and foreground area.

![Not so good](image1.png)

![Really nice](image2.png)
STEP THREE: Instead of using the Remove Color method, try this: Go under the Enhance menu and choose Adjust Color>Color Variations. This will open the Color Variations dialog. The first thing we need to do is remove the color from the photo. Under "1. Select Area of Image to Adjust," select Saturation. Next, under "2. Adjust Color Intensity," move the slider all the way to the right. Make note of the thumbnails under section 3 that appear to the right of these adjustments. This shows various options that you can choose to change your image.

To accept changes, click on one of the thumbnails. In this example, we’ll choose the Less Saturation thumbnail because we want to remove the color. The After image will be updated at the top of the window. Click on Less Saturation two more times to fully remove the color. Don’t click OK yet.

STEP FOUR: Now, select Midtones under section 1. We want to bring out the detail in the photo, which is usually in the midtones. This will help add contrast for a nice black-and-white photo. Press Decrease for whichever color you see an abundance of in the photo. In this example, there are lots of greens on the ground, blues in the sky, and reds in the trees, so click Decrease Red, Decrease Green, and then Decrease Blue. This will likely be different for your photo, so experiment.

STEP FIVE: Let’s try to brighten things up a bit by choosing Highlights under section 1. Look at whichever thumbnail will give you a good separation between the sky and the foreground. We chose Decrease Green. Keep in mind that each photo is different, so again, you’ll have to experiment. The great part about Color Variations is that it’s easy to see what the “after” photo will look like before you apply a setting. Plus, you can always press the Undo button if you don’t like the path you’re going down.

Click OK when you’re satisfied with your after image.

The goal here is to really put some of the power back into your hands when working in Elements and give you the tools necessary to make stunning black-and-white photos that will make people look twice at your images.
camera flash vs. natural light

BY TAZ TALLY

USING YOUR FLASH INDOORS AND AVOIDING IT OUTDOORS ARE NOT ALWAYS THE BEST PATHS TO GOOD PHOTOS. YOU MIGHT REFLEXIVELY ACTIVATE YOUR FLASH WHEN YOU SHOOT PICTURES INDOORS, OR CONVERSELY, YOU MIGHT NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT USING YOUR FLASH WHEN SHOOTING OUTDOORS. THESE STANDARD FLASH/NO FLASH CHOICES ARE TYPICALLY MADE BY THINKING ABOUT ONLY ONE LIGHTING VARIABLE—HOW MUCH LIGHT IS AVAILABLE.

...there are other important lighting variables that you should also consider when deciding whether or not to use a flash in your photos.

Conventional wisdom suggests that if there is low light, use a flash; if there's a lot of light, no flash is required. But there are other important lighting variables that you should also consider when deciding whether or not to use a flash in your photos. These variables include quality of light, angle of light, distribution of light, shutter speed, and focal length of lens required. Below are some examples of flash use and flash avoidance that may give you some new ideas on deciding when to use your flash—or not.

CONSIDER NATURAL LIGHTING WHEN SHOOTING INDOORS

I shot the following indoor photographs at a Christmas family gathering at a small coastal breakfast nook located on one of the barrier islands of South Central Alaska. I shot the first photo with the obligatory flash using a wide-angle lens (to be close enough to allow the flash to have its impact), getting everyone to turn around for the group picture. I then suggested everyone return
to their activities, stepped back into the shadows on the other side of the room, turned off the flash, switched to a longer focal length lens, and started quietly shooting in natural light.

Notice that in the flash photo, the flash lighting is predictably concentrated near the flash and the expressions of the people are mostly posed—some even show irritation. The view is flattened by the flash, and the wide-angle lens distorts the foreground faces. Additionally, everyone is focused on the photographer rather than on each other.

In contrast, the natural-light image shows people acting and interacting naturally, enjoying each other’s company while bathed in soft early morning light, complete with cast shadows that show depth. The slower shutter speed created by the lower light conditions actually adds a more natural feel to the scene by showing some slight motion blur. The longer focal length doesn’t distort any faces. And everyone’s attention is now on the other people at the table rather than the photographer. So the next time you’re shooting a scene that demands a flash, consider the alternative.

Technical Notes: If your natural light conditions are too low and you’re getting too much motion-related blurring, don’t hesitate to switch your camera to shutter priority or manual mode to select the shutter speed you want. And if you capture your images in RAW mode with 16 bits/pixel, you’ll have plenty of image data after resetting your highlights and shadows in Elements to provide good image quality.

Also, whenever possible use a stable object such as a post (used here), countertop, table, or monopod to steady your camera. This will minimize camera shake so that most of the movement will be subject-related, as it is here. New anti-shake technologies are a bonus for shooting conditions like these, so be sure yours is active if your camera has them.

USING FLASH OUTDOORS
You’re probably already acquainted with the technique of using a fill flash for back- and top-lit subjects shot outdoors.

But there are other reasons to consider using a flash outdoors. One condition is when shooting in low-contrast, shaded-lighting conditions, even if there’s enough overall light, and especially if saturated color is an important part of the image. A quick contrast of two shots will help make the point. I shot two exposures of these bluebells embedded in green horsetails, one without flash and one with flash. There was adequate ambient light in terms of quantity, but no direct sunlight.

In the no-flash image, the overall contrast is flatter and the green colors are less saturated. In the flash image, the contrast is improved and the horsetail greens are more saturated and vibrant. Shade conditions such as this typically have reduced amounts of red and yellows compared with more directly lit scenes. That’s why the greens are less vibrant without the flash. Also note, however, that the addition of more red and yellow light by the flash reduced the relative saturation of the bluebells.

(Notes: Both of these images have been highlight corrected. The original images were even more disparate in terms of their contrast and green color vibrancy.)

The camera without the flash captured a lower contrast and less saturated image than the eye could see. So, you might want to make a habit of taking at least one flash picture when shooting in shade conditions—you might just like what you capture! ■
how to choose the best file format when saving images

BY JAN KABILI

PSD, TIFF, JPEG, GIF, PNG—OH MY! HOW’S A PERSON TO KNOW WHICH FILE FORMAT TO USE WHEN SAVING AN IMAGE IN PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS? IN THIS GUIDE WE’LL TELL YOU WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EACH OF THESE COMMON FILE FORMATS, INCLUDING WHEN AND HOW TO SAVE IN EACH FORMAT.

Format affects file size, preservation of image data and layers, and whether the image can be displayed on the Web.

Whenever you save a file in Elements, it’s up to you to choose an appropriate file format. Your choice of format has important consequences. Format affects file size, preservation of image data and layers, and whether the image can be displayed on the Web. Let’s take a look at the qualities and best uses of the most common file formats.

PSD

PSD (which stands for Photoshop Document) is Elements’ native file format. Here’s what you need to know about this format:

• PSD format can maintain all of the layers in an image, giving you flexibility to go back and edit one layer without affecting others.
• PSD format preserves all the re-editable Elements’ features you might add to a file, such as text, shapes, layer styles, and adjustment layers.
• PSD is a non-lossy format, which means that it doesn’t discard image data to reduce file size.

These qualities make PSD the best format for saving a working copy of an image. Let’s say you’ve shot some photographs as JPEGs and opened them in Elements to make adjustments. It’s a good practice to immediately save a working copy in PSD format and make adjustments in that copy. Re-save in PSD format as you work by choosing File>Save. The non-lossy nature of the PSD format allows you to save a file repeatedly without harming image quality.

PSD is also the ideal format for saving a final file with its layers and other editable features intact. After editing, save an image in layered PSD format and archive the PSD on a disk or external drive. This gives you a flexible master file for future editing. If you need other formats for specific purposes, make copies. You might save one copy of the master PSD file as a JPEG for the Web and another as a flattened PSD or TIFF for print.
But PSD files are not the best choice for some purposes. A PSD file can't be displayed on the Web and is often too large to share by email.

**TIFF**

TIFF (Tagged Image File Format) is a standard format for pixel-based images destined for print. TIFFs are universal and cross-platform—that is, they can be opened by many different programs on both PCs and Macs. TIFFs can be saved with layers either intact or flattened.

TIFF is a favorite of designers who are preparing files to drop into a page-layout program, such as QuarkXPress. It's also a useful format in which to save a scan or a screenshot for print. When you save a TIFF, you can choose whether and how it's compressed. The downside of TIFF is that it can produce relatively large files, depending on which compression options are selected.

**JPEG**

JPEG stands for Joint Photographic Experts Group. It's one of a handful of formats (along with GIF and PNG) in which you can save an image from Elements for the Web. JPEG is the best format for saving photographs for the Web, because it can efficiently compress continuous-tone images while retaining photographic image quality. JPEG is also a good format for sharing photographs by email or in an onscreen slide show, because it produces relatively small files.

The major downside of JPEG is that it's a lossy format. In other words, a file loses image data when it's compressed as a JPEG. Each time you make a change to an image in Elements and re-save it as a JPEG, you lose more image data. This is true even if the change seems minor, for example, switching the orientation of an image. It's why I recommend that you do not edit photographs from a digital camera in their original JPEG format. If you must have a final edited photograph in JPEG format for the Web or email, after editing in PSD format, save one copy of the final as a JPEG. This strategy minimizes the number of re-saves in lossy JPEG format.

You should also know that the JPEG format doesn't preserve layers. It flattens multiple layers into one. And JPEG doesn't allow transparency: A transparent area will be filled with solid color when you save a file as JPEG.

**GIF**

GIF (Graphics Interchange Format) is another Web-friendly format. It's listed as Compuserve GIF in the Format pop-up menu in Element's Save As dialog, but it's commonly referred to as "gif" or "jif." A GIF contains no more than 256 colors, so it's not a good format for photographs. GIF is typically used for Web graphics, such as logos, text, illustrations, and simple animations. GIF is another format that doesn't preserve multiple layers. Unlike JPEG, GIF does support simple transparency, with each pixel either completely opaque or completely transparent.

**PNG**

PNG (Portable Network Graphic) is another Web format that's used to save graphics for the Web. PNG is not treated consistently by all Web browsers and is not as widely used as GIF. PNG is available in two flavors: PNG-8, like GIF, supports only 256 colors and simple transparency; PNG-24 can contain millions of colors and more subtle partial transparency. PNGs don't preserve multiple image layers.

**SAVING PSDS AND TIFFS**

Now let's take a look at how to save in each of these common formats. PSDs and TIFFs are saved using the Elements’ Save and Save As commands, as follows:

- If you just want to re-save a file in its current format, choose File>Save (PC: Control-S [Mac: Command-S] or click the Save button in the Editor’s task bar just above the Options Bar). The Save command comes in handy to save changes from time to time during image editing. This command automatically saves over a file of the same name; so be careful not to overwrite a file you want to keep. If the Save command isn't available, you haven't made any changes since the last time you saved. In that case, use the Save As command.

- Choose File>Save As the first time you save an image, or when you want to change an existing file format (for example, to convert a digital photograph from JPEG to PSD for editing). Save As is also the command to use if you want to change a file's name, location, or save options.

- In the Save As dialog that opens, set the file name and location, and choose the file format from the Format pop-up menu. To save in PSD format, choose Photoshop (*.PSD, *.PDD) on a PC or Photoshop on a Macintosh. To save in TIFF format, choose TIFF (*.TIF, *.TIFF) on a PC or TIFF on a Macintosh. The Save As dialog looks slightly different on a Macintosh and PC, so we've included an illustration of both here.

- If the file has multiple layers that you want to preserve in your PSD
or TIFF, make sure there’s a checkmark next to Save: Layers. If you want to save a copy with all the layers flattened into one, uncheck Layers.

• If you want to save a copy with the format and other settings you just chose, but leave the current file open for editing, check Save: As a Copy. This will save a copy in the same folder as the currently open file with the word “copy” automatically added to the filename.

• Click Save.

• If you saved in TIFF format, you’ll see the complicated TIFF Options dialog. Your best bet is to leave the options at their defaults, except that if you know that your file is bound specifically for either a PC or a Macintosh, change the Byte Order setting to that platform name. Click OK to save your TIFF.

SAVING JPEGS, GIFS, AND PNGS
It’s possible to save a file in JPEG, GIF, or PNG format by choosing the corresponding format from the Format pop-up menu in the Save As dialog. In each case, you’ll be confronted with complex save options like those pictured here. You’ll probably find it difficult to make informed decisions about these options. Fortunately, there’s a more user-friendly way to save as JPEG, GIF, or PNG. Use the Save for Web command—even if you’re saving for a non-Web purpose, such as saving a JPEG for an email attachment.

• Choose File>Save for Web.

• In the Save for Web window, choose JPEG, GIF, PNG-8, or PNG-24 from the Optimized File Format pop-up menu just below the Preset pop-up menu on the right-hand side.

• Set the other optimization options, while previewing the effect of your choices on the appearance of the image on the right and comparing it to the original image on the left. Keep your eye on the file size under the preview image too. The better the image quality, the higher the file size will climb. Your job is to strike a compromise between the two. The most significant option for a JPEG is the Quality setting; the most significant setting for GIF and PNG-8 is the number of Colors. Click OK. [For more information on saving files for the Web, see “Save for Web Simplified,” Photoshop Elements Techniques Vol. 3, Num. 3, page 25.—Ed.]

• In the resulting Save Optimized As dialog, set the file name and location and click Save to save a copy of the file in your chosen format.

• The original image remains open. Choose File>Save to re-save it, and close the file. ■

Jan Kabili is a popular Photoshop author and trainer. Her latest book is How to Wow: Photoshop CS2 for the Web. Jan is a professor of digital art at Metropolitan State College of Denver. You can read her regular column, “Photoshop for Educators,” in Photoshop User magazine.
This is the sixth installment of "Tool Time" in the "Beginners Workshop" and we're about halfway through Adobe Photoshop Elements Toolbox. Last issue we covered the Type tool, and in the process discussed resolution and pixels. In this issue we continue on our Toolbox tour with the Crop tool and the Cookie Cutter tool.

THE CROP TOOL

Just below the Type tool is the Crop tool. You can choose the Crop tool by clicking on its icon in the Toolbox or by pressing the letter C. Essentially the Crop tool works much like the Rectangular Marquee tool, so it's pretty straightforward and easy to use. You simply drag out rectangular shapes just like you would with the Rectangular tool, only this time they don't result in a selection; they result in a new boundary for your image.

It's always a good idea to make a copy of your image before you start cropping. Once you save and close your image after you crop it, you're stuck with the new, smaller image and you can't get your original image back. Working on a copy means that your original is always available as a backup.

The obvious use of the Crop tool is to crop your image. Just drag out a rectangle around the area that you want to keep in the image, click-and-drag the handles to fine-tune your cropping rectangle, and press Enter or Return to commit the crop. If you're not happy with the results, simply Undo by pressing Control-Z (Mac: Command-Z) and your image will be returned to its pre-cropped state.

The tool options for the Crop tool include the ability to restrict your image to a particular Aspect Ratio (expressed in inches). You can choose the size from the pop-up menu in the Options Bar or you can simply type numbers into the Width and Height fields.

A RESOLUTION WARNING

If you were familiar with the term "aspect ratio" before you started using Photoshop Elements, the settings in the pop-up menu may be slightly confusing because technically, an aspect ratio is not a measure of inches; it's simply a ratio. By expressing it as a measure of inches, Photoshop Elements will almost always reset your resolution during the crop function. (The rule of thumb is a resolution of 72 ppi for Web graphics and 150+ ppi for printing high-quality photographs.)

After you crop your image, you can check the resulting resolution in the Image Size dialog via the Image menu (Image>Resize>Image Size). If the resolution is too low for your purposes, you should...
undo the crop (Edit->Undo Crop), and try again by grabbing a larger portion of your image. Keep doing this until your resolution remains high enough. (Note: It’s not advisable to enter a numeric value in the Resolution field in the Options Bar for the Crop tool, because this method often “stretches” your image, making it blurry.)

THE NOT-SO-OBVIOUS CROP

There are also a couple of ways you can use the Crop tool that aren’t as obvious. If you’re working on a project that needs some extra space around your image, you can use the Crop tool to increase the overall size of your canvas area.

Note: The newly added canvas area will be the same color as your current Background color in your Toolbox, so you may want to pick the appropriate color before you crop to enlarge. To change your Background color, click on the Background color swatch at the bottom of the Toolbox. This will bring up the Color Picker where you can choose your new color. Click OK in the Color Picker when you’re done. Now you’re ready to begin:

STEP ONE: In Maximize mode, start by pressing Control-- (Mac: Command--) several times to zoom out until you can see your whole project in the center of your working area, as well as some extra space all around your image. If you’re in Cascade or Tile mode and your image window is set to resize to fit the image when you zoom in or out, simply zoom out using the shortcut above and then grab the bottom left-hand corner of the image window and drag it out.

STEP TWO: Starting at the top left, drag out a crop box that covers your entire image. Then, drag the handles out to increase the size of your crop box. (Tip: Hold the Shift and Alt [Mac: Option] keys while dragging out one of the corner points if you want to add equal canvas area on all sides of the image.)

STEP THREE: When you press the Enter key your image will have a larger canvas area for extra working space.

Another less obvious capability of the Crop tool is that you can rotate your cropping box to change the orientation of your picture while cropping. Drag out a cropping boundary and, before you hit Enter, place your cursor just outside the live area of your crop. It will turn into a double-headed arrow and you can click-and-drag your crop box to any angle you like. Finally, when you hit Enter or Return, your image will automatically be cropped and rotated.

Extra canvas area was added to the image on the top left by dragging the handles of the cropping boundary beyond the edges of the image. The car in the photograph above was rotated by moving the cursor outside of the cropping boundary and clicking-and-dragging.
When it comes to projects like digital scrapbooking, the Cookie Cutter tool can be a great timesaver while adding to the creative look of your piece. To activate the Cookie Cutter, you can either click on its icon in the Toolbox or press the Q key. Because this tool is the digital equivalent of cutting out a shape with scissors and throwing away the scrap, you’ll want to make sure you only work on copies of your images. Plus, since the “extra” stuff gets deleted and the deleted areas become transparent, it’s probably a good idea to put your image on its own layer above the Background layer and then fill the Background layer with a solid color. A color-filled layer below your cutout layer will make it easier to see the results of your Cookie Cutter tool.

To do this, drag your Background layer onto the Create a New Layer icon at the top of the Layers palette. This will create a copy of your Background layer called “Background Copy.” To fill your Background layer with a solid color, click on the Background layer in the Layers palette to make it active, and press Alt-Backspace (Mac: Option-Delete). This will fill the layer with your current Foreground color.

Thankfully, not every cutout has to be a heart shape. If you click the heart shape in the Options Bar (at the top of your document) next to the word “Shape,” a pop-up list of available shapes will appear and you can choose a different one. This dialog is called the Custom Shape Picker. What’s more, if you click on the arrow at the top right of the Custom Shape Picker, you can load even more shapes. I usually go ahead and load all of my shapes.

After you pick your shape, then it’s just a matter of dragging out the shape you want on your Background copy layer. And don’t worry if the shape isn’t lined up perfectly. When you let go of the mouse button, the shape will appear within a bounding box with handles so you can resize, move, or rotate your shape the same way you did with the bounding boxes created by the Crop tool. Then all you have to do is hit Enter or Return to make the Cookie Cutter throw away the “scrap.”

Note: If your Cookie Cutter didn’t seem to cut out your image, check the Layers palette to make sure you’re working on your image (Background copy) layer, not your Background layer.

Now you’re ready to cut out all kinds of shapes, and you can do it much faster and more accurately than with scissors—and there’s no mess to clean up! ■
The Backspace key (Mac: Delete key) can be used as a quick way to fill a selection (or an entire layer if nothing is selected). If you want to fill with the current Foreground color, press Alt-Backspace (Mac: Option-Delete). To fill with the current Background color, press Control-Backspace (Mac: Command-Delete), and to open the Fill Layer dialog, press Shift-Backspace (Mac: Shift-Delete).

To create a new document that has the same settings (Width, Height, Resolution, and Color Mode) as a document that you currently have open, start by using File>New>Blank File (or press Control-N [Mac: Command-N]). Then, look at the very bottom of the Preset pop-up menu and you'll see a list of your open documents. Choose the document whose settings you want to “borrow” and all the settings will be changed in the New document dialog to match that document. (Note: You can also achieve the same result by opening the New dialog and then going to the Window menu and choosing the document you want to use from the bottom of that menu.)

Here's a simple way to crop a photo while keeping it in the same aspect ratio (the ratio of the width to the height). Choose the Crop tool (C), but before using it, go to the Options Bar and use the pop-up menu beside Aspect Ratio and choose Use Photo Ratio. Now when you click-and-drag with the Crop tool, the dimensions of the crop area will match with the ratio of your photo. This allows you to crop out details you don't want, without changing the overall shape of your photo.

Speaking of the Crop tool, when you've finished dragging out your cropping boundary, a shaded area known as the Shield indicates the area that will be "removed" when you finalize the crop. To toggle the visibility of the shield on and off, press the Slash key (/). Each time you press that key, the shield will be either hidden or shown depending on its current state. (Mac users can also use settings in the Options Bar to change the visibility, the color, and the opacity of the shield.)

To change the color of a Type layer, you don't have to select the text with the Type tool—unless you only want portions of the text to be a different color. To change all of the type on a layer to a different color, just make sure that the layer is active in the Layers palette and
that the Type tool is also active. Then in the Options Bar, just use the Color menu to choose a new color for the type. If you want only certain letters to be a different color, then you’ll have to use the Type tool to select those letters first, and then use the Color menu in the Options Bar to choose a new color for the highlighted letters. Unfortunately, when you highlight a letter, the color you’ve chosen won’t display on the letter until you’ve deselected the type.

Here’s an interesting—and nondestructive—way to experiment with your photos: Add an adjustment layer that makes a dramatic change to the image and then apply one or more filters to the layer mask. In this example, we added a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer (Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue Saturation) and moved the Saturation slider all the way to the left in the Hue/Saturation dialog to create a grayscale image and then clicked OK.

Then we applied two filters to the layer mask: first Filter>Render>Fibers and then Filter>Sketch>Halftone Pattern. Depending on the resolution of your image, you’ll need to experiment with the settings in each of the filter dialogs to achieve your desired effect. The beauty of this method is that it’s very simple to start over by filling the layer mask with white and then trying other filters. To fill the layer mask with white, just click on it in the Layers palette to make sure it’s active and then follow tip number 1 on the previous page.

Imagine that you’ve added an adjustment layer to an image and spent some time painting on the layer mask to make only certain areas affected by the adjustment layer. Then you realize that you might get better results with a different adjustment layer, say Levels instead of Hue/Saturation. Rather than starting all over again with a new layer mask, just go to the Layer menu, under Change Layer Content, and choose the new adjustment layer that you want to use. The new adjustment dialog will open and the layer mask will be preserved from the previous adjustment layer, saving you from having to re-do the work you did on the mask.

When you’ve used the Group with Previous command (Layer>Group with Previous) to make a layer clipping group, new layers will not be added into the clipping group automatically—unless you add a keyboard shortcut. With the top layer in the clipping group active, hold down Control (Mac: Command) when you click on the Create a New Layer icon in the Layers palette. The new layer will be added below the current layer and will be part of the clipping group.
After teaching a Photoshop Elements class, I’ve had students tell me that they’ve tried to use the Process Multiple Files command only to quit out of frustration. So this article is the condensed (don’t add water) explanation of what this command does and how to make the most of it.

The purpose of the Process Multiple Files command is to allow you to apply a series of operations to a large number of images with a single command—without learning how to program anything. One possible example of processing multiple files would be to rename the techno-babble filenames produced by your digital camera when you return from a long vacation. This command allows you to either replace the original filename with a combination of dates and sequential numbers or append them before or after the original filename. What it does not allow is adding custom text. For example, you can’t change “DSCN1234” to “Vacation 2006 001.” (Hopefully, Adobe will add that feature to a future release.)

While it may seem that renaming a single file is easy enough, renaming 200 files is a different matter. But with the Process Multiple Files command, it’s a simple task. Because of the aforementioned custom text limitations, it may seem like this isn’t a very useful tool, but there’s much more to it than just renaming images. This same command can be used to change the formats or size of all the images in a single folder, and it can even apply automatic enhancements or add captions to the images. So let’s begin by learning how the command works.

Choosing Source Files and Their Destination
When you go to the File→Process Multiple Files command, a large dialog fills a good portion of your screen. For those who use Photoshop Elements on a Mac, the operation and appearance of this command is identical to the PC. The first step is to select the files that you want the command to operate on. In the Process Files From pop-up menu located in the upper-left corner of the dialog, you can determine what files will be processed. There are three options: Folder, Import, and Opened Files. The Folder option...
allows you to select an entire folder that contains the images you want to process (this is the default setting and the most popular choice). (Note: Mac users will find a fourth option, Bridge, which is only available if you open Process Multiple Files under the Tools menu in Bridge.)

If your digital camera is connected to your computer or you’re using a scanner with a document feeder, you can select Import from the pop-up menu and the command will import and process multiple images from these devices. This is a slick way to download and rename your digital photos right out of the camera. Be advised that when you first connect your camera to the computer, the Adobe Photo Downloader will automatically launch. If that’s not enough, PC users will discover that Windows will also launch a window to try to control the download. When either or both applications launch, just close them; it won’t hurt the programs (or their feelings). (Note: While the Process Multiple Files command can be used with a scanner, the software that comes with your typical document feeder scanner is a better choice.)

The last choice in the pop-up menu for selecting files to be processed is Opened Files. You can choose this option to process only files that are currently open, even if you have only one file open.

Assuming that you want to process all of the images in a particular folder, use the Browse button to select the folder. When the Browse for Folder (Mac: Choose a Destination Folder) dialog opens, you’ll notice that thumbnail previews aren’t available for your images, so you’ll need to know which folder contains the images you want to process before you start the command. Once you highlight the folder and click OK (Mac: Choose), the next decision is where to send the processed images.

If you check the Same as Source option, you’ll receive a warning message that the original source files will be overwritten. This can be somewhat misleading. This warning is true only if you’re saving the files in the same format as the original. For example, if you’re changing file types, such as JPEGs to PSDs or TIFFs, then the source files will not be overwritten because these processed files will have a different extension. For some reason, the command doesn’t bother to check to see if the Convert Files To option is checked.

If you’re saving the processed files to a new location (always a good idea when practicing with this command the first few times), click the Browse button instead. You can create a new folder for the processed files from within the Browse for Folder (Mac: Choose a Destination Folder) dialog by clicking the Make New Folder button (Mac: New Folder button).

Once you’ve chosen the files you want to process and where they’re going to be saved, all you need to do is decide what you’re going to have Elements do to the files. Here’s a list of what can be done with the Process Multiple Files command:

- Rename files
- Resize images
- Change file formats
- Apply Quick Fix commands
- Apply a watermark or a caption to each image

RENAMEING FILES

Renaming files is the example I used at the beginning of this article. Using this feature allows you to change the names of
all of the files in a folder to a compound name that can include things such as the original document name, serial numbers, dates, and extensions. This part of the process is a no-brainer. Simply pick the parts that you want the new filename to include from the two drop-down menus.

If you choose to add a serial number, you can choose the starting serial number just below the second drop-down list. Don't worry about the compatibility checkboxes; if you don't check them, all of the normal formats (JPEG, PSD, TIFF, etc.) will open normally. The checkbox is for when you select a unique format that uses different settings between computer platforms. If you're only using JPEG, PSD, and TIFF, you're safe.

RESIZING IMAGES
Again, this one is pretty straightforward. It's a handy way to make a lot of huge images into a lot of small images so that you can send them to someone via email, post them on the Web, or fit them onto a small storage device. You can choose the resulting new size either by units of measure (inches, pixels, cm, or mm) or by percentage. Be careful if you're saving the images back into the source folder using the same file format. All of your original images will be resized and there is no Undo with Process Multiple Files.

A few other warnings about resizing: First, it's generally accepted that making an image larger (upsampling) will degrade the image. This means that those great soccer shots you took with Aunt Bertha’s 1-megapixel camera she bought at the garage sale will look even worse after you’ve doubled their size. Second, never uncheck the Constrain Proportions option. When checked, this ensures that the aspect ratio of the original is maintained. If it’s not, the images will be distorted. For us older types, that means they can look like they were taken in a fun-house mirror.

CHANGING FILE TYPES
Murphy’s Law states that if you have a project that requires all the images be in a specific format, it’s never the current format of your images. With this command you can check the Convert Files To checkbox and Elements will open each file and save it in the specified new format.

Please note that if you work with RAW files, all of the files are converted regardless of the settings. This is because Photoshop Elements cannot save images in RAW format, so when they're opened, they must be saved in PSD format unless a different format is specified in this section of the dialog. This doesn’t apply to renaming or relocating the files. You can rename RAW files and move them without opening them.

APPLYING QUICK FIX COMMANDS
In the upper-right corner of the dialog, you can choose any or all of the four Quick Fix commands to be applied to the images. I personally think this is best left unused because you won’t be able to tell how each of these four auto image enhancers impacts your images until after they’ve all been processed. These enhancements are best done on a case-by-case basis. If you need to use these commands, then I recommend that you stick with Auto Contrast and Sharpen. Auto Levels and Auto Color have a real tendency to produce a bluish color cast.

ADDING CAPTIONS AND WATERMARKS
When I first saw this feature, I had visions of being able to put cool watermarks or add great general-purpose captions to the Description field of all of my images. But Adobe had different ideas about what actually constitutes a watermark or a caption. Whether you pick Caption or Watermark in the Labels section, the command places a Type layer on the photo based on the size and other font information that you select. The only difference between the two is that you can create custom text in Watermark, whereas Caption only allows you to use one of three options: File Name, Description, or Date Modified.

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Dave Huss has more than 25 years’ experience as a photographer and has authored more than 17 books on digital photography and digital photo editing. His latest book is Adobe Photoshop Elements 4: 50 Ways to Create Cool Pictures.
HAVE YOU TOLD SOMEONE LATELY HOW MUCH HE OR SHE MEANS TO YOU? A SCRAPBOOK PAGE IS A GREAT WAY TO DO IT. GET OUT A PIECE OF PAPER AND JOT DOWN PHRASES ABOUT THE PERSON YOU PLAN TO HONOR. INSTEAD OF USING A BLOCK OF TEXT TO TELL HOW MUCH THE PERSON MEANS TO YOU, ADD SOME VISUAL INTEREST TO YOUR PAGE BY PUTTING EACH SENTENCE ON A STRIP OF PAPER.

STEP ONE: Open the scrapbook page that you’ll be using. Press D to reset your Foreground and Background color swatches to their default setting of black and white. Select the Type tool (T), click on your document, and type the first sentence. Click on the checkmark in the Options Bar to accept the type.

STEP TWO: Click on the layer in the Layers palette just below the type. Make the Foreground color white by pressing X to switch the color swatches. Select the Rectangle tool from the Shape tools in the Toolbox and click-and-drag an outline around your type, leaving some extra space at both ends. When you let go of the mouse, the rectangle will fill with white. Click on the Simplify button in the Options Bar.
STEP THREE: Press the Control key (Mac: Command key) and click on the Type layer to select it as well as the white-filled rectangle layer. (Elements 3: click on the column between the Eye icon and the thumbnail of the Type layer to link the two layers together.) Choose Merge Layers (Elements 3: Merge Linked) from the Layers palette More menu.

STEP FOUR: Select the Lasso tool (L) and draw a jagged selection around one end of the “paper.” Choose Select>Feather, feather by 1 pixel, and click OK. Press the Backspace (Mac: Delete) key to delete the end of the paper. Deselect (Select>Deselect) and do the same for the opposite end of the paper.

STEP FIVE: To give the paper a bit of character, we’ll bend it a little. With the Rectangular Marquee tool (M), click-and-drag an outline slightly bigger than the strip of paper. Choose Filter>Distort>Wave from the Menu bar. Use the settings shown here, or experiment with your own. (Note: For the Wavelength, you have to raise the Max setting before you can raise the Min setting to 453.) Click OK and deselect (Select>Deselect). There will now be a slight bend to the paper.
STEP SIX: Duplicate the paper layer by pressing Control-J (Mac: Command-J). Click on the original paper layer in the Layers palette. Press the letter D to reset your Foreground and Background colors, and press Alt-Shift-Backspace (Mac: Option-Shift-Delete) to fill the strip with black. Choose Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, blur by 3 pixels, and click OK. This will create a soft drop shadow behind the paper.

STEP SEVEN: Press Control-T (Mac: Command-T) to bring up the Free Transform tool. Press the Control key (Mac: Command key), click on the right middle handle on the bounding box, and drag the shadow down slightly. Press the Arrow keys on your keyboard to move the shadow to the right and down one or two pixels. Double-click inside the outline to accept it. Click on the Opacity slider at the top of the Layers palette and drag it to the left until the shadow looks realistic to you (we used 60%).

STEP EIGHT: Repeat the above steps to make a paper strip for each comment you make. Use the paper, brad, and star circlet provided on the Photoshop Elements Techniques website (www.photoshopelementsuser.com/subscriber/printextras.php) to complete the page. Use the Move tool to drag the brad into your scrapbook page, drag the new brad layer above the paper strip layer in the Layers palette, and then use the Free Transform tool to resize and reposition the brad as needed. Notice that I varied which side of the strip appears to be sticking up by varying the shadow and brad.

Tintypes, also known as ferrotypes, are a photographic process invented in the mid 1800s. Regardless of their name, they’re not on a sheet of tin, but rather on a thin sheet of painted iron coated with a highly flammable substance used for making photographic plates called collodion, a colorless or yellowish syrupy solution of pyroxylin, ether, and alcohol. The tintype was a successor to the ambrotype, which was a negative image on glass rather than iron. Part of the reason tintypes were so popular is the durability that iron provided rather than glass. Tintypes were an inexpensive way of taking pictures as opposed to previous methods, and much faster. As such, people from more walks of life than ever before could have family photos taken; tintypes are responsible for bringing photography to the masses. The process was fast enough for use by traveling photographers, so families gathered and had their photos taken in front of the family home, or anyplace that had meaning for them. Many Civil War era photos are tintypes for the simple reason that it was such a portable process. They were also quite popular because the images of loved ones could be tucked in a pocket and taken along without breaking, unlike the ambrotypes, which were on glass plates.

The variety of uses for tintypes made them popular too. Besides portraits, they were also placed in envelopes and mailed as postcards; and the Gem format that measured about 0.75" across was popular for insertion into lockets. Another interesting thing about tintypes is that most of them were mirror images, although unless there was a sign of some sort in the image, you can’t tell. This is because they’re actually negative exposures, but the black background painted on the tin makes them appear positive. There were some cameras that contained mirrors or a 45° prism to reverse the image, but the majority of the cameras weren’t fitted with such enhancements, so most tintypes are mirrored.

Most of us have a tintype or two among our collection of vintage family photos, and as so often happens, they’re tossed into a shoebox with other photos without ample protection for the delicate surface. Sometimes they’re in damp attics, garages, or basements, lost
among old dresses, books, and other family memorabilia.

While you certainly want to keep the original tintypes to be shared with other family members, they need to be duplicated. And since they're a one-of-a-kind item, some special care is in order for their storage and handling before, during, and after the duplication process.

STORING YOUR TINTYPES
The surface of a tintype is easily damaged: it can be scratched, and the oils on your fingers can mark the surface. Direct sunlight, moisture, extreme temperature changes (like those from attic storage), and dust can cause damage to the surface. Because they're created on iron, they don't get moldy as paper photographs can, but they can get rusty. The edges can break off and the chemicals can separate from the iron sheet. Another problem is pests. Mice leave their calling cards on everything, and tintypes will not stand up to that sort of treatment.

The best way to avoid damage is to store the tintypes where they're protected from all of these things: inside a container in an area of the house that's not subject to extreme temperature changes where it's dark and dry. Do not rubber-band stacks of tintypes together; the stress from the band can cause cracks and other defacement.

Some tintypes were pasted into paper cards with windowed openings. These cards often had a decorative, embossed border, which provides some protection. The image is recessed from the border, so less likely to be touched, and the edges are covered so they're less likely to crumble away. For these tintypes, keeping them in a good quality plastic sleeve to protect them from dust and scratches is usually sufficient. Acid-free paper envelopes can be used, but as they're opaque, you'll have to handle the tintype further to find the one you're looking for—if you're fortunate enough to have a collection.

Do not place tintypes in self-adhesive or magnetic photo albums. If you want to store them in an album, make sure the pages are acid free and use acid-free photo corners to attach the tintype to the page—avoid paperclips, scotch tape, and glue.

Do not display the tintype in direct sunlight. It's best to duplicate the tintype, make your repairs digitally, and then print and frame the final image. If you do want to frame the original tintype, do not place the glass directly on the image surface; use an acid-free mat to keep some distance between the tintype surface and the glass and an acid-free backing between the back of the tintype and the cardboard spacer. Make sure the tintype is out of sunlight and away from heating and air-conditioning sources.

HANDLING TINTYPES
Be careful when handling the tintypes. Keep your work area clean and free of dust, and when you pick up the tintype,

Do so by the edges, rather than letting your fingers touch the surface. This will not only avoid scratches, but also keep the natural oils from your fingers away from the surface where they can cause damage. The oils from your fingers may not show an immediate effect, but they remain on the surface even if you can't see them, and over time can cause
Tintypes were cut by hand with tin snips, so no matter how carefully you lay them on the scanner bed, they'll probably need to be straightened. Because the edges of the tintype weren't always cut straight, use the vertical or horizontal line of a wall (or anything else you know should be straight) in the image, or use the people in the photo as your straightening guide. Use the Straighten tool (P) and click-and-drag along the line that should be horizontal, and when you let go of your mouse button, Photoshop Elements will automatically straighten your image. After straightening, save these individual images. These are your digital negatives. My preference is to save them as Photoshop PSD files because that's where I'll do any repair work on the scans before doing a final save and sharing them with relatives.

Discoloring and deterioration. You can also wear cotton gloves when you're handling the images.

**DUPLICATING YOUR TINTYPES**

Because tintypes are one-of-a-kind, the most important thing is to make sure that they're no longer the only copy of the image. Fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and other disasters can strike without much warning, and if you're worried for your family's lives, your first thought is not going to be, "Grab the tintypes!"

Tintypes are not easily duplicated by normal means. If you have one tintype, that's what you have—one. To share them with family members, you can't just run the negative to your neighborhood drugstore and have copies made. First, you'll have to get them into a format the drugstore can duplicate, or that you can print at home, and that's where Adobe Photoshop Elements and your scanner come in.

Make sure the scanner bed is clean and free of dust; but don't use glass cleaner to clean the scanner bed directly before scanning. You don't want glass cleaner residue to touch the tintype surface. It's better to use a soft cloth and water, and dry the glass thoroughly before placing the tintypes on the scanner bed.

If you're using Photoshop Elements 3 or 4, you can lay all of the tintypes on the scanner bed at once and use the Divide Scanned Photos command to get them into Photoshop Elements for saving. First, go to File>Import and choose your scanner from the submenu. Instead of selecting one image at a time, drag the marquee for the scanning area around all of the tintypes. Scan as usual. Once the page of images appears in Photoshop Elements, go to Image>Divide Scanned Photos and let Elements divide the scan into separate images.

Sara Froehlich teaches online classes at Eclectic Academy (www.eclecticacademy.com) in Photoshop Elements, Photoshop, Xara Xtreme, and more. She also teaches Illustrator and Photoshop Special FX at LVS Online (www.lvsonline.com) and is the Editor of Designorati: Illustration at Designorati (www.designorati.com). For more information on all of her classes, go to www.northlite.net.
Step by Step

CREATING THE SKETCH

STEP ONE: To convert the original image for this process, open the image and select File>Duplicate. We need to flip the image using Image>Rotate>Flip Horizontal so we have a mirror image. (The image will be the correct way once we transfer it.) Convert the file to black-and-white by selecting Image>Mode>Grayscale.

STEP TWO: Now we need to blur a little of the image detail so we don’t end up with a grainy sketch. I do this by adding a little Smart Blur to my image (Filter>Blur>Smart Blur). Make sure the Quality is set on High and use your Radius and Threshold to blur the detail between the lines in the image slightly, then click OK.

from digital photo to polymer clay art

I CAN’T DRAW. I’M SERIOUS—IF I HAD TO DRAW A PORTRAIT OF SOMEONE, IT WOULD LOOK LIKE A BAD STICK FIGURE. FOR运幸ely, ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS MAKES ME LOOK LIKE A TALENTED SKETCH ARTIST. ONCE I FINISH THE SKETCH IN ELEMENTS AND PRINT IT, I TRANSFER THE SKETCH TO SCULPEY CLAY AND PAINT IT FOR A TRANSPARENT WASH OF INKS.
**STEP THREE:** We can convert the file to a sketch now by selecting Filter>Stylize>Find Edges. Readjust your exposure by using Control-L (Mac: Command-L) to bring up the Levels dialog and dragging the shadow Input Levels slider (the one on the left) to the right. You can see I dragged mine quite a bit, but not all the way over. Click OK. Now we have some detail in the shading of the face and some good strong lines in the basic outlines.

**STEP FOUR:** We want to add some density and strength to the lines of the cap, so select the Burn tool, set its Exposure in the Options Bar to almost 100%, and click-and-drag to burn in those areas of the cap. Complete any other clean-up to the image and print the image on a toner-based printer (such as a LaserJet) or copy it on a toner-based copier, using standard plain white paper (not photo paper). The fresher the print, the quicker it transfers.

**CREATING THE TRANSFER**

**STEP FIVE:** Roll out 2 oz of Beige Sculpey III polymer clay (www.sculpey.com) to ⅛-⅛” thickness. (If using a clay-dedicated pasta machine, use a wide-open setting.) Place the transfer face down on the clay and wipe the entire surface quickly with rubbing alcohol. Make sure all the paper is dampened, or it will draw up. Lightly rub out any bubbles between the paper and the clay. Allow the alcohol to evaporate.

**STEP SIX:** Resoak the paper with the alcohol, again rubbing the image lightly. Let it set for about 5 minutes. Peel up a corner and check your transfer. If the image appears ready, rewet it and slowly peel up the paper. If an area has not transferred completely, lay the paper back down before you remove it completely. Rewet the area and rub with your finger or the back of an old spoon. Continue to remove the paper.
STEP SEVEN: Trim the clay to the image area and bake it according to the package directions. Once the clay is baked and cooled, begin to paint the image using alcohol-based inks such as Piñata Colors (www.jacquardproducts.com). I prefer to add the Piñata ink to the brush by touching the tip of the bottle to the brush and squeezing lightly. When brushing with ink, pay attention to the direction of the brush strokes—use them as a textural pattern.

STEP EIGHT: Clean your brush with either the Piñata Clean-up Solution or rubbing alcohol. Wipe the brush on a sheet of paper to remove the excess cleaner and add your next color. Tint the face with a little Santa Fe Red Piñata ink, mixed with either Piñata Extender or rubbing alcohol. This creates a light wash of color that can be blended with a cotton swab.

STEP NINE: You can use the Clean-up Solution or rubbing alcohol to remove ink in areas to simulate highlights, as we’ve done here on Anna’s cap and pajamas. (Note: Soft-lead color pencils can be used instead of the alcohol-based inks to color the portrait.) The finished clay piece can be placed into a tabletop easel.

Syndee Holt is an independent designer for Polyform Products, Jacquard Products, and Savage Universal. She has a photo degree from Brooks Institute of Photography. Her work can be found in most arts/craft magazines as well as on home craft television shows.