Get Perfect Prints

Take the guesswork out of printing your favorite shots with our step-by-step guide.

Create 3 Classic Film Looks
Boost your editing chops while adding a nostalgic, dreamy feel to your photos.

Have Fun With Clip Art
Insert your friends into vintage artwork for a one-of-a-kind portrait.

Plus
- Design Digital Stitches
- Master Your Camera’s Flash
- Subscriber Showcase
Editor’s Note

Every summer, my husband’s family gathers at his aunt’s house in Northeast Harbor, Maine. It’s a wonderful, rambling old home filled with timeworn furniture, odd knickknacks, and family treasures from generations past. One of my favorite spots in the house is the stairwell, where almost every inch of the wall is covered with photos. From quick snapshots to formal portraits, huge gatherings to intimate close-ups, the wall is a lovely testament to a life filled with family, friends, and travel. In fact, it’s not unusual to find family members lingering there mid-step—their errand momentarily forgotten—as they peer fondly at one of the familiar shots.

Having recently returned from this year’s visit, I’ve resolved to be more proactive about printing out images from my own photo library. Far too many of my favorite photos—including some treasured portraits of my own small, but growing family—lie trapped within my overstuffed hard drive. It’s about time I found a worthy spot for them around the house.

If you’re thinking of printing a few of your own photos, turn to page 9 and read Ben Long’s step-by-step guide to preparing your photos for the printer. Translating colors and tones from your computer to paper isn’t always a simple process, but there are some easy steps you can take in Elements to ensure you get rich shadows and sharp details with every print.

Even if you don’t do a lot of printing, the article is worth reading for Ben’s tips on using the histogram. As he explains, our eyes often tell us we have strong black and white when in fact, we don’t. This can result in washed out or overly dark images. Elements’ histogram offers a more objective evaluation of your image’s highlights and shadows. Once you understand what your histogram is telling you, making even minor changes can result in huge improvements to your image’s tones.

I hope you enjoy the other treats in this month’s issue. We’ve also got a fun tutorial on how to add the faces of your friends to clip-art images—which includes some great tips for adjusting skin tones—and helpful advice for taking control of your camera’s flash. If there are specific topics or editing tricks you’d like to see covered in the future, I’d love to hear from you.

The November/December 2010 issue will begin shipping to subscribers around November 10. Until then, happy editing!

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What’s Happening Online
Every month, in our exclusive subscriber-only area, we post new videos and tutorials from some of the top Photoshop Elements gurus. Here are the most recent postings:

NEW VIDEOS
- Getting the Orton Effect
- Turn a Dull Shot into a Moody Masterpiece
- Don’t Shoot Raw+JPEG
- Silhouette Art

NEW TUTORIALS
- Making a Metal Slide for Scrapbook Ribbons
- Working with Lightroom and Elements
You'll need two things to get started with this project: a high-resolution vintage image of a man, woman, or child (see the online extras for a list of resources); and a photo of the face you want to swap in. Since you’ll be adjusting the tone and adding grain or texture to match the clip art, the photo doesn’t have to be perfectly sharp; in fact, you may be able to salvage a photo that you might have otherwise discarded. What’s most important is that the shape and tilt of the face in the photo be similar to that of the clip art.

**1**

By Diana Day | I adore the nostalgic feel of vintage clip art. To give these old images a new twist, I like to swap out the faces in the clip art with photos of my own family and friends. It’s a fun project I first learned from Nancy Marti, one of our moderators on Elements Village. Since then, I’ve created several of these compositions for friends and relatives—and they’re always a big hit. In this tutorial, I’ll show you how to join the fun and create your own clip-art face swap. You can apply many of the techniques I’ll use to other projects, such as creating collages and correcting skin tones.

To download the two files I used, go to the Magazine section of the website and click on the September/October 2010 issue. There, you’ll also find links to online resources for vintage clip art, and other examples. PhotoshopElementsUser.com

**2**

Open the clip art file and press **Ctrl-J** (Mac: **Command-J**) to duplicate the background layer. Double-click on the name of the duplicate layer and rename it “Cutout.”
Click on the Background layer in the Layers palette, and then click the Create New Layer icon (or select Layer>New Layer). This will put a blank layer between the two images. Next, fill the new layer with white by choosing Edit>Fill Layer and selecting White from the Use pull-down menu (make sure the Preserve Transparency option is turned off).

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Zoom in on the clip-art image so the face fills most of the screen. Pick the Selection Brush tool (A), and in the Options Bar, select any solid round brush. Set the Mode menu to Mask and the Hardness to 75 percent. Working on the Cutout layer, paint over the area of the face you want to remove. Make sure you go all the way to the hair line, but don’t remove too much. Fill in the selection completely.

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When using the Mask mode with the Selection Brush tool, the painted area is excluded from the selection. (Change the brush’s Mode to Selection and zoom out, and you’ll see from the “marching ants” that we’ve selected everything but the face.) This means that to select the face, we need to invert the current selection. Choose Select>Inverse. Feather the edges of the selection a bit by choosing Select>Feather and entering 2 pixels for the Feather Radius.

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Click on the Background layer in the Layers palette, and then click the Create New Layer icon (or select Layer>New Layer). This will put a blank layer between the two images. Next, fill the new layer with white by choosing Edit>Fill Layer and selecting White from the Use pull-down menu (make sure the Preserve Transparency option is turned off).

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Faster Zooms  A quick way to zoom is to use the scroll wheel on your mouse. To set this up, press Ctrl-K (Mac: Command-K) to open your preferences, and then place a checkmark next to the Zoom With Scroll Wheel option.
We’re now ready to bring in our new face. Select the middle white layer in the Layers palette. Open the photo with the face you wish to use. To see both images side-by-side in the workspace, select Window/Images/Tile. Now select the Move tool (V) and drag the face photo onto the clip-art image. It should become a new layer below the Cutout layer and above the blank white layer. We no longer need the face photo, so click on it, then select File>Clean.

In most cases, you’ll need to adjust the imported face—resizing, repositioning, and rotating—so it looks natural with the rest of the clip art. Make sure the new face layer is active in the Layers palette, and then press Ctrl-T (Mac: Command-T) to activate the free transform option (this will ensure that you don’t accidentally change layers as you manipulate the face image). To reposition the layer, place the cursor inside the bounding box and drag the face to a new location. Clicking on the box’s handles and dragging inward or outward will resize the layer. (To prevent distorting photos when resizing them, drag from one of the corner handles, which maintains the aspect ratio.) To rotate the layer, position your cursor just outside the bounding box and when you see a curved double-headed arrow, click and drag. When finished, press Enter or click on the green checkmark.

With the Cutout layer still active, press the Delete key to remove the face, leaving a lightly feathered edge around a blank white face. Deselect with Ctrl-D (Mac: Command-D). Drag the new image onto the clip-art image.
The trickiest part of the swap is getting the color of the skin tones and brightness of the new face to match the clip art. In most cases, you’ll need to lighten the face quite a bit. Every combination of clipart and face will be different so you may need to try various techniques to get the new face to match.

With the face layer active, try one or more of the following methods as needed:

**Lighten Tones** Press Ctrl-L (Mac: Command-L) to bring up the Levels histogram, and then move the right and/or middle sliders to the left to lighten the face.

Another option for lightening tones, which produces a slightly different result, is to choose Enhance>Adjust Lighting>Brightness/Contrast. Move the Brightness slider to the right or left to improve the color. You can also experiment with the Contrast slider. In fact, I often combine the effects of both of these tools while trying to blend the face with the clip art.

**Remove Redness** If the skin tones of the face image are too red, press Ctrl-U (Mac: Command-U) for the Hue/Saturation dialog. From the drop-down menu, select Reds, and then drag the Saturation slider to the left to decrease the red in the face.

**Match Skin Color** Here’s an adjustment that may help with matching the skin’s color. Choose Enhance>Adjust Color>Adjust Color For Skin Tone. When the dialog pops up, click on the face to get a color sample (the cursor will turn into an eyedropper), and then drag the sliders as needed to obtain a skin tone more compatible with the clip art.

**See the Difference** If you’re having trouble seeing the effect of adjustments you make in any of these dialog boxes, make sure the Preview option is checked.
To help blend the edges of the new face in with the clip-art image, select the Cutout layer in the Layers palette. Choose the Blur tool (R). In the Options Bar, set the Strength to 10 percent and place a checkmark next to the Sample All Layers option. Now, drag the cursor in short strokes along the jaw to smooth it out and blend the edges.

Since vintage clipart tends to be grainy. To apply a similar grain to the face, select the face layer in the Layers palette and then choose Filter>Distort>Diffuse Glow. Adjust the settings to add a little grain, and also a bit of glow, if needed. For this example, I set the Graininess to 5, the Glow to 1, and the Clear Amount to 18.

If the Diffuse Glow filter doesn’t produce enough grain, or if the resulting graininess is too light to match the clip art you’ve used, another option is to use the Add Noise filter (Filter>Noise>Add Noise), which tends to produce a darker grain. (Experiment with turning on the Monochromatic option in the Add Noise dialog.)

And there you have it! I hope you have as much fun with this project as I have. I’d like to thank Karen of Lunagirl Images (www.lunagirl.com) for providing the download of the clip-art image I used, which is from her $15 CD “Vintage Women & Men.” Please post your own face swap images on the Elements Village forum to share.

Diana Day, retired H.R. Manager and self-taught Elements user, hosts a PSE Users Group where she teaches Elements to members of her community. Diana also puts her skills with Elements to practical use administering her church’s Web page and public relations projects.
Call me old-fashioned, but as far as I’m concerned, a photo just isn’t a photo until it’s on paper. Sure, digital images are great for sharing in slideshows and online galleries. But when it comes to the photos I really care about, I still prefer the look of ink on paper. I also like that physical photos can be passed around and hung on walls.

But getting good prints can be tricky. The truth is, prints almost never come out looking exactly like the image on your screen. To a degree, this is simply due to the differences in technology; your computer and printer mix colors in very different ways. But plenty of other problems can also crop up when you attempt to translate pixels to paper—dull tones, strange colors, blurry details, and more. It’s enough to make you swear off paper forever.

The good news is that, with a little understanding and the tools in Photoshop Elements, you can vastly improve the quality of the images that come out of your printer. I’ll take you step by step through a proper printing workflow and show you how to improve your photo’s tones and solve other common gotchas that can pop up when you hit the Print button.

Don’t let your best photos languish on the computer. This simple four-step system takes the guesswork out of putting ink to paper.
Step 1  
Get the Right Size

Before you even think about printing, you need to make sure your image has enough pixels (or image data) to print at the size you want. If it doesn’t, your final print will look soft and lack sharp details.

Check Resolution

Photoshop Elements’ Image Size dialog box (Image>Resize>Image Size) lets you set the size and resolution of your image. First, make sure the Resample Image option is turned off. All three options in the Document Size section should now be linked. Change either the Width or Height field to your desired print size (when you change one setting, the other will also adjust to remain proportional).

After you’ve done this, take a look at the Resolution field. This number tells you how much image data you’ll have per printed inch. Ideally, you want a resolution of at least 240 pixels per inch (ppi). That said, bigger prints can often get away with lower resolutions because they’re viewed from farther away. For a 13x19-inch print, for example, you can probably go as low as 180 ppi. (Of course, if you have enough pixels in your image to get higher resolution at this size, go for it.)

If the Image Size dialog shows the size you want at a resolution of 240 ppi or higher, then you can close the box and move on. But if your resolution is too low for a good print, you’ll have to make a decision: Either print your image at a smaller size (which will increase the resolution), or resample the image to add more pixels. To increase the pixel count, click the checkmark next to the Resample Image option, and enter the desired number into the Resolution field. Ideally, you want 240 ppi, but keep in mind that if you add too many pixels, your image may get a bit soft. So, if you’re starting with a small image, you’re better off being conservative and raising the resolution only to 150 or 180 ppi.

Save a Copy

When you’re done resizing, choose File>Save As, and save the resized version as a new document. Since resizing for print might have reduced or increased the number of pixels in your image, you want to be sure that you don’t overwrite the version of the file with the original pixel count. I append the word “-print” to my original filename to help distinguish the new file. When you’re done printing, you can either throw the print copy away, or keep it so that you always have a print-ready version at hand.

Too Much of a Good Thing  It’s OK to have a resolution of more than 240 ppi, but keep in mind that above 300 ppi, you’re not going to see any improvement in image quality, and your prints will take longer to send to the printer.

EXTRAS: GET MORE ONLINE!

For more on using the Image Size dialog—including a smart way to enlarge your image—see the Tool Tips in the May/June 2010 issue, or go to our website and type “Image Size” (including the quotation marks) into the search field. PhotoshopElementsUser.com
Feature

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2010

Step 2

Fine-Tune Highlights and Shadows

Next, you’ll want to examine the tones in your image. If an image doesn’t have a good tonal range, it can look washed out or print too dark. The key to spotting and correcting these types of problems is to use the histogram, a graph that shows the distribution of tones in your image. The histogram can often spot problems that your eye would otherwise miss.

Learning to Read a Histogram

To see a histogram of your image, open the Histogram palette (Window>Histogram). Elements can display different types of histograms. For judging brightness, click the Channel pull-down menu in the Histogram palette and choose Luminosity. You’ll see a graph of your image’s tones, with black on the left side, white on the right, and grays in the middle.

In the image to the right, for example, you can see that there’s very little black data (the left side of the histogram) because there are very few dark tones in the image—just the black bits on the top of the rocks. There’s a lot of data in the middle, which are all of those gray tones that comprise the clouds and rocks, and there’s a fair amount of highlight data—notice the spike at the far right edge of the histogram—thanks to the bright parts of the sky and the brightest rocks.

Once you understand what the histogram is telling you, you can take steps to address potential problems.

Why Don’t My Prints Match My Screen?

The painful truth of printing is that a print very rarely, if ever, looks exactly like the image on your computer monitor. Translating color from your computer to your printer is very complicated. One way to help alleviate this problem is to run a calibrated printing system. In a calibrated system, you use special hardware to profile your computer monitor and printer, which in turn creates a special document that describes their color and contrast characteristics. These profiles are used by color-management software to accurately translate colors from one device to another.

When it works well, a color-managed system can yield a much better match between your screen and printer, but, in addition to the cost of the profiling hardware, you’ll need to have a fairly expensive monitor to reap the full benefits of the system (most sub-$1,000 LCD monitors and laptop screens lack the necessary adjustment latitude). Then, once you do get everything calibrated, Elements still doesn’t magically display images that look like they will when printed. And, if you want to “soft proof”—view your image with a profile specific to a certain paper type—you’ll need an add-on like Elements+ (see the July/August issue for more).

Unless you work professionally as a photographer, I suspect that the effort and money you’ll spend setting up a calibrated system far outweigh the modest gains you’ll get in color accuracy.

That said, there are some simple—and inexpensive—steps you can take to optimize your monitor for image editing:

Use a Software Calibrator

Mac OS X and Windows 7 include free monitor-calibration tools, which will help adjust your monitor’s brightness and colors. In Windows 7, click on the Start button and select the Control Panel. In the search box, type “Calibrate Display” and select the Calibrate Display Color option. In Mac OS X, open System Preferences, click the Display icon, and under the Color tab, select the Calibrate option.

Turn Down the Brightness

If prints consistently come out dark, the problem may be the brightness setting on your monitor. Laptop screens are particularly prone to this. Try turning down the brightness. It may also help to set the lights in your workspace slightly dimmer than your screen, so you don’t feel like you need such a bright image.

Eliminate Distractions

If you can see your Desktop background while you edit, make sure it’s not set to a bright color, which may affect how you perceive the colors in your image. Instead, choose a neutral gray. Lighting can also affect how you perceive colors. Avoid overhead fluorescent light if you can; a halogen desk lamp or natural filtered light make better choices.
Fixing Low-Contrast Images

The most common problems with printed images are contrast-related, which can make a photo look dull or washed out. This generally happens when there’s no true black in the photo.

Consider the image of the trees shown here. In the shadows of the trees, the darkest bits should be black, and if you were looking at the image on its own, you might think that was the case. But if you look at the histogram for the image, you’ll see that the left edge of the histogram shows there’s no real black there—the shadows are actually just a dark gray. Look at the right side, and you’ll see that the whites are pretty weak as well. The result is an image that lacks strong contrast.

You can easily improve the contrast by adding a Levels adjustment layer. With the photo layer selected in the Layers palette, choose Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. When the Levels histogram pops up, move the black point (the left-most slider under the histogram) to the right until contrast is improved.

One of the obstacles you face when editing a photo is your own eyes. Not only do your eyes automatically correct whites so that color casts are hard to see, but they’ll correct a light gray so that it appears white to your eyes. This is why a histogram is essential for determining true contrast.
**Lightening Dark Images**

In the portrait on the right, the image looked pretty good on screen. The whites seemed white, and the overall brightness looked okay. But when I printed it, it was too dark. A quick look at the histogram shows why: There’s no white in the image, which means her white stripes are really a shade of gray—making the overall image appear a little dingy. In this case, I added a Levels adjustment layer and moved the white point to the left so it reached the edge of where the data is.

On the other hand, if your image has a good white point—meaning it stretches all the way to the end of the histogram—but still prints too dark, the problem likely lies with your midtones.

Most of the foreground and background in the landscape image, below, for example, is composed of midtone data—all of the green plains, grass, buildings, and clouds. Those tones aren’t dark shadowy areas, nor are they really bright highlights. If you look at the histogram, you’ll see that the bulk of that image data lies to the left (towards the shadow area) of the middle point in the image’s tones. This is why our image is too dark.

To correct it, I added a Levels adjustment layer and moved the midpoint slider to the left. This served to brighten the midtones. Unfortunately, it also weakened the blacks a little, so I moved the black point slider a little to the right. The result is a brighter image, and a histogram that now shows the tones biased a little more toward the center of the image.
Step 3
Sharpen Details

Most images benefit from a little sharpening. If you’re working with Raw images, you’ll almost certainly need to sharpen before printing, as the camera doesn’t apply any sharpening on its own. For JPEG images, which typically do get sharpened by the camera’s software, you’ll need to judge whether the image needs a little extra help.

Keep in mind that you can’t truly sharpen an image that’s out of focus, or smeared with motion. A sharpening filter works by finding the edges in your image, and then darkening the pixels on the dark edge, and lightening the ones on the light edge. So you’re really just adding contrast to the edges in your image to accentuate them—and producing the illusion of improved sharpness.

Elements includes a few different sharpening filters, but I find the Adjust Sharpness command (**Enhance**>**Adjust Sharpness**) to be the most effective for this type of work. The other options offer less sophisticated algorithms and no precise control over the amount of sharpening.

It’s difficult to accurately gauge whether you’ve applied the right level of sharpening before you print, so I recommend duplicating the image layer in the Layers palette before you sharpen (**Layer**>**Duplicate Layer**). Then apply sharpening to the new layer. By working on a duplicate layer, you’ll still have your original layer to go back to if your sharpening settings yield bad results when printed.

Unless you’ve enlarged an image a lot, you’ll probably want to keep the Radius setting at 1.0 pixel or less; the Amount rarely needs to go over 100 percent. (Radius controls how many pixels get adjusted on either side of an edge, while Amount controls the amount of adjustment that gets applied to those pixels.)

As you adjust settings, be careful not to overdo it. If you sharpen too much, you’ll see little halos around all of the edges in your image. This can result in an image that looks oversharpened.

Be realistic about the capabilities of your printer. You’re not going to get the same color range from an inexpensive four-color inkjet that you would from a six- or eight-color photo printer.
Step 4
Save, Print, and Evaluate

Now you’re ready to try a test print and see how well your initial adjustments fared. This is the part of the process that many photographers rush through. But printing isn’t an exact science—because of the differences in the way monitors and printers mix and display colors, translating pixels from the screen to paper typically requires a bit of experimentation. So while you might be able to knock out snapshots without too much thought, for an image that you’re trying to work up into a nice print, you should expect to do at least one test print.

Setting Your Printer

Save your finished image, and then choose File>Print. The Windows and Mac operating systems have different printing interfaces, but both offer controls for selecting the printer, and for selecting the paper size. Further complicating matters is the fact that different printers come with their own drivers and offer different printer-specific controls within the Print dialog box.

While we can’t detail the specifics of every type of printer driver, here are some of the common controls you’ll find, and how to use them:

**Paper Choice** Some papers are more absorbent than others, so your printer needs to know what kind of paper you’re printing on. This will give it a better idea of how much ink is required to achieve a particular color. If you’re using paper manufactured by your printer vendor, then it will probably be listed by name in a menu in your printer driver. If you’re using a third party-paper, then check to see if it came with instructions for what settings to use. If it doesn’t, then try to pick something that seems similar. For example, if you’re printing on a glossy paper, pick a glossy option in the printer driver.

In Windows 7, click on the Printer Preferences icon to the right of the printer name to access paper settings. In Mac OS X, click the Print button to bring up the standard Print dialog where you can select a paper type.

**Color Management** If you’re using a Mac, click on the More Options button at the bottom of the Print dialog box and choose Color Management. Make sure Color Handling is set to Printer Manages Colors. This will ensure that Elements’ idea of what color should be doesn’t collide with what your printer’s ideas of color are. In Windows 7, click the Printer Preferences icon and then click the Advanced button at the bottom of the window. Change the ICM Method to ICM Handled By Printer.

**Black and White** If you’re printing a black-and-white image, then you might need to activate a special black-and-white mode in the printer driver controls. This will typically help the printer produce a more neutral print. Consult your printer’s manual for details.
Evaluating the Print

While your printer grinds away on your image, it’s a good idea to either switch to a different image on your monitor or walk away from the computer entirely. There’s a big difference between the self-illuminated images on your monitor and the reflected color on a piece of paper. Even if the color matches exactly, switching from viewing your monitor to looking at a print can be jarring. So, when you pull the page from the printer, it’s a good idea to do it with fresh eyes.

When you’re ready to evaluate the results, look for signs of trouble:

**Contrast**  Is there good contrast, meaning there’s a true black, if it’s needed, and the right amount of overall contrast?

**Highlights**  Are the highlights overexposed, or do they have detail? These will appear as paper white in your final prints, and large areas of white can serve as “eye magnets.” The viewer often can’t help but look at them. If your original image is a Raw file, you may be able to recover them using the Recovery slider in the Adobe Camera Raw software. If you’re working with a JPEG, there’s probably little you can do but decide whether the problem is bad enough to wreck the image.

**Strange Colors**  Is there a color cast (an overall, unwanted color to your print)? If there is, let the image sit for 20 minutes and then check again. If the image still looks a little off, try to find something white in it, and compare it to a white piece of paper. Your eye does a great job of making not-quite-white things appear white, so using a good reference will help determine if the whites in your image are really white. If they are, then the rest of your colors won’t have a cast.

**Sharpness**  Is the image sharp enough? Place the photo at a reasonable viewing distance—with a large print, for example, you’d probably stand a few feet away—and then examine the edges in your image. If you enlarged the image, you’ll want to pay particular attention to strong diagonal lines to ensure that they don’t have visible stairstepping patterns.

Adjust and Repeat

If you need to make changes, and you’ve applied your edits in a non-destructive manner, as explained earlier, then you should be able to easily go back and tweak each adjustment. If you need to change sharpening, then you’ll need to delete the appropriate layer, duplicate your original layer, and then re-apply your corrections with better parameters.

This may sound like a lot of work, but a beautiful final print is well worth the effort. And believe it or not, plain old paper is still more durable than hard drives or CDs. As you do more prints, you’ll begin to get an eye for how your screen corresponds to the final page, and you’ll learn the particulars of your specific printer. All of this experience will make your printing tasks go much quicker.

Choose the Right Paper

If your test print image doesn’t have strong blacks, and you’ve already boosted the Levels black point in Elements, then you might need to consider switching paper. The ability to yield a very dark, rich black is often what separates good paper from cheap paper.

While glossy papers are seductive with their shiny surfaces, they’re not ideal for fine art work. Glossy papers never yield very dark blacks. However, inexpensive matte papers won’t necessarily do any better. Moving up to a quality fine art matte paper will get you a blacker black, and therefore better contrast. Also, because matte papers lack a glossy surface, your image won’t be obscured by reflections and sheen.

Epson, HP, and Canon all sell high-quality fine art papers that will yield much better results than budget papers, and there’s usually a setting for these papers in the printer driver, so you won’t face any confusion about how to configure your print settings. But there are also plenty of third-party companies that make great papers. Hahnemühle, Red River, Moab, InkPress, and other companies have excellent offerings, and many sell inexpensive sample packs that make it easy to test a range of papers.

Create Three Classic Film Looks
Learn how to use color and filters to infuse photos with sense of nostalgia

By Jeff Carlson Photoshop Elements can fix color casts, repair flaws, balance exposure, and even merge the best aspects of several photos into one image. But many photos from the days of film cameras and basement darkrooms are considered beautiful as much for their imperfections as for their technical merits. The ravages of time and sunlight, as well as the unique qualities of the film stock and equipment used, all combine to give older photos a powerful sense of time and place.

You don’t have to return to film to capture the mood and colors of vintage photos. The creative tools in Photoshop Elements can help make photos appear as if they were shot in a bygone age or with other camera equipment. In this article, I’ll show you how to create three specific “looks.” Even if you’re not interested in aging your photos, you can take advantage of the techniques I use to customize your photos in other interesting ways.
The Attic Relic

A lot of the character of old photos comes from the materials on which they were printed and how they’ve aged over the years. In this example, I’ll make a modern photo look like a faded, time-worn artifact from a safari near the turn of the 20th century by compressing the tones, adding a vignette, applying scratches, and more.

1 Open your image in Elements. Old black-and-white photos that have been exposed to too much sunlight usually take on a sepia tone. To mimic that effect here, click the Adjustment Layer icon in the Layers palette (circled) and choose Hue/Saturation from the pull-down menu. (Note: the Adjustment Layer icon appears at the top of the palette in Elements 7 and earlier.)

2 In the Adjustments palette, click the Colorize button, and then adjust the Hue slider until the photo has a sepia tone (I find that a setting of 29 works well). If the color is too intense, nudge the Saturation slider to the left to make the effect more subtle.
Many old lenses produced a subtle vignette, which darkened the edges of the image. To produce this effect, create a new layer (Layer>New>Layer). Using the Lasso tool (L), draw a rough circle just inside the edges of the photo.

Bypass the Lasso If you have trouble drawing with the mouse, you can also use the Elliptical Marquee tool (M) to draw an oval; however, I prefer the less uniform edge created by the Lasso.

To make the vignette look less like a 1950s TV, drop the selection by pressing Ctrl-D (Mac: Command-D). Now choose Edit>Fill Selection. From the Contents Use menu, choose Black and then click OK.

Invert the selection by pressing Ctrl-Shift-I (Mac: Command-Shift-I). Next, choose Edit>Fill Selection. From the Contents Use menu, choose Black and then click OK.

To better simulate the optics of early cameras, we need to compress the picture’s tones—making the highlights and shadows more pronounced. The obvious option would be to use a Levels adjustment layer; however, I find its results still make the image look a little too “perfect.” Instead, select the Background layer and press Ctrl-J (Mac: Command-J) to duplicate it. Rename the layer “Overlay.” Apply a Gaussian Blur filter again (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur), but at a much lower level—between 10 to 20 pixels. Now return to the Layers palette and choose Overlay from the blending mode pull-down menu.
Now it's time to rough up the image a bit by adding some film grain. Duplicate the Background layer again by selecting it and pressing Ctrl-J (Mac: Command-J). With the new layer selected, choose Filter>Texture>Grain. In the dialog that appears, choose Regular from the Grain Type pop-up menu, and play with the Intensity and Contrast sliders to apply the level of noise you want (for this example, I set the Intensity to 37 and the Contrast to 55). Click OK when you're satisfied.

We can further weather the image by creating scuff marks. Create a new empty layer (Layer>New>Layer) above the Overlay layer we made in Step 5, and fill it completely with black by choosing Edit>Fill Layer. Open the Grain filter again (Filter>Texture>Grain), and this time choose Horizontal or Vertical from the Grain Type pop-up menu. To make the effect more visible, you'll need to push the Intensity and Contrast sliders pretty high. Click OK. Finally, change the blend mode for the scratches layer to Screen, which retains the scratches but lets the image show through the black areas of the layer.

The resulting scratches tend to be more uniform than I'd like. To solve this, take the Eraser tool (E), set its opacity to 50 percent, and wipe away random sections of the layer. If the remaining scratches still seem too strong, you can adjust the opacity of the layer to make them more subtle.

As a last step, make the photo appear a little washed out by applying a Levels adjustment layer. Choose Levels from the Adjustment Layer pop-up menu in the Layers palette, and make sure it's the top-most layer. In this case, I've brightened the photo by moving the midtones slider to the left. The result is a photo that appears slightly yellowed and faded with time and just a little worse for wear—just as you'd expect from a recently discovered treasure from your parents' attic.
Open a photo in Elements. We’ll start by warming up the image. In the Layers palette, choose Photo Filter from the Adjustments Layer pop-up menu. In the Adjustments palette, set the Filter pop-up menu to Warming Filter (85), which applies a slight orange tint. Increase the Density slider to 70 or 75 percent, and make sure the Preserve Luminosity setting is enabled.

For Raw Images If you’re working with a raw image, you can make many of the color and exposure adjustments discussed here within the Adobe Camera Raw utility that comes up when you open a raw file. (Playing with the White Balance Temperature slider does a lot of the work.) You can then switch to Elements for tasks such as applying grain and blur.

Flashback to the 1970s

You don’t need to completely “damage” a photo to be creative with its appearance. A few color adjustments can turn a snapshot into a photo that looks vintage, without jumping immediately to a sepia tone. For example, one characteristic of photos from the 1970s is a slightly muted, yellowed, and occasionally washed-out appearance. The effect is often subtle, especially compared to the previous example, and yet it’s often easy to identify a typical snapshot taken in that era.

Techniques

THREE CLASSIC FILM LOOKS
2 Next, soften the image. Duplicate the Background layer (so we’re not damaging the original) by selecting it and pressing Ctrl-J (Mac: Command-J). Rename the new layer “Blur and Grain.” Apply a Gaussian Blur filter (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur), and select a Radius of 1 to 2 pixels. The blur should be relatively subtle.

3 Still working on that same duplicated layer, choose Filter>Texture>Grain. In the dialog that appears, choose Regular from the Grain Type pop-up menu, and play with the Intensity and Contrast sliders. You want a softer effect here than what we achieved with the attic image (I set the Intensity to 19). Click OK when you’re satisfied.

4 We also want to fade the colors in the photo. Here’s a method that applies a washed-out appearance and looks better to my eye than just reducing the saturation. Duplicate the “Blur and Grain” layer, and then choose Enhance>Convert To Black And White. Click OK in the dialog that appears to create the black-and-white version (the Portraits style should be selected). Then, in the Layers palette, set that layer’s blend mode to Darken. You can use the Opacity setting to adjust how washed-out the image appears (I chose 50 percent).

5 Applying the blur and grain effects tends to darken the image more than I’d like, so, as a final step, I compensate by lowering the white-point value. To do this, click on the Adjustment Layer icon and choose Levels from the pull-down menu. Drag the white arrow to the left to brighten the image.
The Holga prints images on medium format film, which has a square aspect ratio. So the first step is to crop the image. With an image open in Elements, choose the Crop tool (C). In the Options Bar, choose “5 x 5 in” from the Aspect Ratio pop-up menu. Drag the cursor tool across the image to specify the crop, and then click on the green checkmark to apply it.

A strong vignette is one of the hallmarks of a Holga photo. Although I preferred the hand-drawn look of the Lasso tool in our first example, for Holga images, I recommend using the Elliptical Marquee tool (M). Start by creating a new layer (Layer>New>Layer). Use the Elliptical Marquee tool to draw a circle from corner to corner. Invert the selection by pressing Ctrl-Shift-I (Mac: Command-Shift-I), and then choose Edit>Fill Selection and fill the layer with black.

Remove the selection by pressing Ctrl-D (Mac: Command-D), and then choose Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and soften the edges of the vignette. Since the vignette intrudes too far into the image, use the Free Transform option to resize it. With the layer selected, press Ctrl-T (Mac: Command-T). While holding Alt-Shift (Mac: Option-Shift), drag a corner point to resize the vignette from the center. Click on the green checkmark when you’re done.

Free-Spirited Holga

The Holga is a popular and inexpensive plastic film camera that is prized as much for its faults as its strengths. Its components are inexpensive, resulting in variations in lens quality, seams in the body that leak light, and a manual advance mechanism that doesn’t always hold the film tight. Those characteristics might give some people cold sweats, but other photographers see the imperfections as a way to ignore any attempts at making “perfect” photos, and instead embrace the playfulness of unexpected imagery.
To add to the sense of imperfection, let's also apply some subtle color fringing to the vignette. With the vignette layer selected, click on the Adjustment Layer icon and select Hue/Saturation. In the Adjustments palette, click the Colorize button. You’ll see that this applies the effect to the entire image. In Elements 8, click the Clip To Layer button (circled) in the Adjustments palette to apply the effect to just the vignette layer. In earlier versions of Elements, you’ll need to temporarily close the dialog box and press Ctrl-G (Mac: Command-G) to group the two layers.

Move the Hue slider to the right (purples and reds) and increase the Lightness slider slightly to add just a touch of the color.

Colors often pop in Holga shots. To increase the saturation of your image, select the Background layer, and create a second Hue/Saturation adjustment layer. This time, drag the Saturation slider towards the right so the colors are just slightly oversaturated. To accentuate the effect, click the New Adjustment Layer icon for a third time and choose Brightness/Contrast. Increase the two sliders, particularly the Contrast slider, until the photo’s color really stands out.

Not only does the Holga’s plastic lens often soften the image, the blurring isn’t uniform, particularly around the edges. To mimic this effect, select the Background layer and press Ctrl-J (Mac: Command-J) to duplicate it. Using the Elliptical Marquee tool (M), create a round selection as you did in Step 2. Then choose Select>Feather and enter a high value (such as 50 pixels) to soften the selection border. Press Ctrl-Shift-I (Mac: Command-Shift-I) to invert the selection.

To create the blur, choose Filter>Blur>Radial Blur, and in the dialog that appears, specify a Zoom blur with an Amount of around 10 to apply to effect to the outer edges. Click OK, and then press Ctrl-D (Mac: Command-D) to drop the selection. The result is an image that looks soft and slightly distorted around the edges.

For better portraits, learn to take control of your camera’s built-in flash settings

By Derrick Story | The built-in flash on most compact cameras has a pretty rotten reputation. Its disappointing results range from overblown highlights to black-hole-like backgrounds. As a result, many photographers resort to turning off the flash permanently. But like any feature on your camera, your flash can be a powerful photographic ally. The secret is knowing when to use it and how to fine-tune its settings.

Don’t Fear Your Flash

For better portraits, learn to take control of your camera’s built-in flash settings

Get Better Outdoor Portraits

What’s the quickest way to improve outdoor portraits on a sunny day? Turn on your flash. Wedding photographers and event shooters have used this seemingly counterintuitive advice for years. By turning on your flash, you’re better able to balance the ambient illumination from the sun with a second light that’s pointed directly at your subject. The result: even exposure, a twinkle in the eyes, and smoother skin. Who wouldn’t want that?

The first step to becoming everyone’s favorite photographer is to override your automatic system and force the flash to fire in bright light. On compact cameras, find your flash menu and navigate to the Flash On setting (it’s usually represented by a lightening bolt arrow). This tells the camera to fire the flash regardless of the ambient lighting. If you’re using a DSLR, then all you have to do is to pop up the flash on your camera, or mount an external flash in the hot shoe.

Make sure that you’re in the range of your flash—usually between 6 and 10 feet—and take a picture. You’ll notice that the eyes now sparkle and that the skin surface appears smoother. That’s because frontal light is flattering for portraits.

Because the overall scene was fairly bright, the camera’s automatic flash didn’t fire in the shot in the left, leaving the subject underexposed. In the image on the right, I forced the flash to fire.
Some photographers resist using a flash because it overpowers the ambient light, resulting in a slightly artificial look. To solve the problem, simply tap into your camera’s Flash Exposure Compensation setting. This feature ratchets down the light output from your flash and helps create more natural portraits. You’ll still get the twinkling eyes, but most observers would never guess that you used a flash to produce those pleasing skin tones.

You may have to consult your camera’s owner’s manual to find its Flash Exposure Compensation setting. (Make sure that you don’t confuse Flash Exposure Compensation with regular Exposure Compensation. The first controls the output of the flash; the latter affects the ambient exposure.) Once you find it, you’ll see a scale with 0 in the middle, +1 and +2 to the right, and -1, -2 to the left. Zero represents the camera’s default setting.

Since your camera is likely pumping out a bit too much light at its default setting, switch from 0 to -1 to decrease the output. Now take the picture again. You should notice that the resulting glow looks much less like a flash and more like natural light. If the flash still seems too strong, try -1.5 and -2. They might not provide enough light for your taste, but at least you’ll know your options. (Most photographers settle in around -1.)

This technique also helps you more accurately photograph people with rich skin tones, or subjects wearing very dark clothing. In its default setting, the flash can be fooled in these scenarios and overexpose your shots. As a result, a black tuxedo suddenly looks washed out. When this happens, tell your flash to back off by setting it to -1.5 and reshoot the picture. I’m guessing you’ll like those results much better.

**Fill in Dark Corners**

Learning how to control your camera’s flash will certainly improve your shots indoors and out. But there are times when you need just a bit more light than your flash can produce—for example, to add a second light to indoor portraits or to light up a dark corner of the room. An easy and inexpensive solution is the Morris Mini Slave Flash II ($42; www.themorriscompany.com).

This petite 2.5-inch square fits easily in your camera bag, yet packs a powerful punch. And because it’s triggered by any flash that fires, the device works with any camera. The flash even includes a tripod socket so you can mount it on a compact tripod and place it anywhere you need more light. When your camera’s flash fires, so does the Morris. I like to tuck them behind my subject to help light up the background, making the composition far more interesting.
Warm Up Skin Tones

There’s more to an attractive portrait than getting the exposure right; pleasing color is also important. The light emitted from your flash is referred to as “cool,” meaning that it has a slight bluish cast. This can make your photos feel a little lifeless.

To warm up those skin tones, find your White Balance setting and change it from Auto to Cloudy (just look for the cloud icon in the menu). By switching to Cloudy, you’re actually enabling the equivalent of a warming filter, resulting in more pleasing skin tones.

Heighten Drama as the Sun Sets

If you really want to make an impression, have your camera handy as the sun goes down. Twilight portraits provide drama by balancing a colorful sky or romantically lit scene with artfully exposed subjects. Try this at a wedding sometime; you’ll be the hit of the reception.

In low-light situations like evening parties, your camera is focused on lighting the subject, not so much the backdrop, which can end up fading to pitch black. The trick in this situation is to slow down the shutter speed so your camera records all of those background details—such as the beautiful, subtle tones at sunset—and then fire the flash to provide a little fill light on your subjects so they don’t become silhouettes.

This may sound tricky at first, but your camera likely has a preprogrammed setting for just this occasion. On compact cameras, you can typically find it in one of two places: First, look in your flash menu for a Night Portrait setting (the icon is typically a person with a star or moon overhead). If you don’t find anything there, then go to your Scene Modes menu and look for Night Portrait or Twilight. Most consumer DSLRs have this setting right on the top mode dial.

Once you find the setting on your camera, keep a few things in mind as you set up the shot:

Steady the Camera  This setting works its magic by slowing down the shutter to capture the ambient light. But a slow shutter speed can also result in camera shake, making the image look soft. You can prevent camera shake by putting your camera on a tripod, or steadying it on a solid surface when you take the picture.

Keep Them Still  Movement by the model can result in a blurry shot. Tell the subject to stand still until the camera has finished making the exposure.

Stay Close  Make sure you’re within flash range. Keep the distance between the camera and the subject in the range of 6 to 10 feet.

If everything works properly, the shutter will open, record the colors of the background, then pop the flash just enough to illuminate your subject. The results can be stunning.

Without the flash, this couple would have become a silhouette, but with just the automatic flash, the sunset’s colors would have been washed out. By switching to Night Portrait mode, I was able to capture the sky while still illuminating the happy couple.

The reason so many photographers dislike the flash is because they don’t take control of its function. By learning how to control its output and adjust the white balance, you can produce beautifully lit portraits with even the simplest compact camera.

Derrick Story is the author of The Digital Photography Companion (2008; O’Reilly Media) and instructor for Lynda.com. He also publishes a blog and weekly photography podcast at www.thedigitalstory.com.
All Sewn Up
How to embellish collages, photos, and other projects with digital stitches

By Liz Ness | My sister is amazing with a sewing machine. From beautiful wedding dresses to stylish upholstery, there isn’t anything that’s beyond her. On the other hand, I can never remember how to thread the needle, tend to load the spools backwards, and have an uncanny knack for hurting myself when adding a stitch to even simple craft projects.

So until recently, I’ve coveted crafty stitchery—especially those cute threaded borders along the edges of layouts—from a safe distance. But thanks to Photoshop Elements, I now have a fun solution to my sewing envy: digital stitches. With just a few steps, I can add texture and dimension into my projects, attach notes and journal boxes to layouts, and apply cute borders to cards. Best of all, these stitches never cause injuries.

1 Typically, stitching is used to embellish an existing project. In the following example, I’ll apply a stitch to the left border of the recipe card; however, any photo, scrapbook page, or other project will work.

2 To help line things up, turn on the grid. Choose Edit>Preferences>Grid (Mac: Photoshop Elements>Preferences>Guides And Grids). Set the Gridline Every option to 50 pixels and click OK. Now, select View>Grid to make the lines visible.

Lemon Bread
Grandma Margaret Wedertz

Preheat oven to 350 and grease/fLOUR one loaf pan. Then, with ½ cup melted butter, mix the following:
1 cup sugar grated rind from 1 lemon (~2 tbsp)
½ tsp salt 1 tsp baking powder
2 eggs 1 ½ cups flour
½ cup milk

Pour into prepared loaf pan and cook for 50 minutes. Just out of the oven, drizzle a mixture of ¼ sugar and juice from 1 lemon over the top.

EXTRAS: FOLLOW ALONG!

To download my original file, go to the Magazine section of the website and click on the September/October 2010 issue. PhotoshopElementsUser.com
3 We need to create a new layer for our stitch. In the Layers palette, click on the New Layer icon (it’s located at the bottom of the palette in Elements 8). Double-click on the title of the new layer and rename it “Thread.” Press D to set the background and foreground colors back to their default values, and then press X to swap the colors so that white is the foreground color.

4 Select the Brush tool (B). In the Brush Picker drop-down menu in the Options Bar, select the Hard Round 5 Pixel brush from the Default library (hover your mouse over the thumbnail to see its name). Next, click on the paintbrush icon at the end of the Options Bar to open the Brush Dynamics pane. Adjust the Spacing slider to 1 percent and check that the Hardness slider is set to 100 percent.

5 Position the cursor along a grid line of the document and click the mouse once to lay down a dot (this will be the beginning of the stitch). Then, while holding down the Shift key, click where you’d like the line to end. This should give you a straight 5-pixel white line. Select View>Grid to hide the grid and see your line.

6 Next, we’ll create the illusion of holes. (We’ll lay these right over the top of the line we just created.) To start, press X to switch the foreground color to black. Create a new layer in the Layers palette and rename it “Holes.” With the Brush tool (B) still selected, set the brush size to 10 pixels. In the Brush Dynamics pane, change the Spacing slider to 400 percent and check that the Hardness slider is still set to 100 percent.
7 Position the cursor over the white line created in Step 5 and click the mouse once to lay down a dot (this will be your first hole). While holding down the Shift key, click once at the end of the white line. A line of black dots should appear superimposed over the white line.

Tip: Line Them Up If the line of dots falls a little to one side or the other of the white line, select the Move tool (V) and use the arrow keys to move the line of dots into position.

8 To give our thread some depth, let’s add a drop shadow to it. First, select the Thread layer, and select Window>Effects to view the Effects bin. Select the Layer Styles icon. Then, from the drop-down menu at the top of the bin, select Drop Shadows. In the pane that appears, select the Low shadow (it’s the top-right option) and press Apply.

9 Select Layer>Layer Style>Style Settings and set the Lighting Angle to 90 degrees for a vertical stitch or 180 degrees for a horizontal stitch. Now set the Size to 5 px, Distance to 5 px, Opacity to 45 percent, and then press OK. You should see a subtle drop shadow on your thread.
10 We should also add depth to our holes, so it looks like the thread is pulling on them slightly. Select the Holes layer and return to the Effects bin. This time, select the Bevels option from the drop-down menu, and then select and apply the Simple Emboss option. Now select Layer > Layer Style > Style Settings and set the Lighting Angle to 90 degrees for a vertical stitch or 180 degrees for a horizontal stitch. Set the Size to 1 px, the Direction to Down, and press OK.

11 A real stitch often has loose thread at the ends. Select the Thread layer and the Brush tool (B). From the Brush Picker pull-down menu, again select the Hard Round 5 Pixel brush. Then, in the Brush Dynamics pane, adjust the Spacing slider to 1 percent. Set the foreground color to white by pressing X. Finally, position the cursor at one end of the white line and draw a short, curvy thread. Repeat for the other end.

12 We have our basic stitch completed; but it still doesn’t quite look realistic. Real thread isn’t a solid color; there are fibers that catch light and create shadows. To simulate that for our digital thread, we’ll clip a fiber pattern to the thread layer with one of the default patterns that comes with Elements. With the Thread layer selected, choose Layer > New Fill Layer > Pattern and press OK. In the Pattern Fill dialog box, select the Weave pattern (circled) from the pattern drop-down menu, set the scale to 30, and press OK. Then, press Ctrl-G (Mac: Command-G) to clip the pattern layer to the thread layer.

**Lighten Up** The pattern fill may make your thread appear darker than you’d like. If so, simply lower the opacity of the Pattern Fill layer to lighten the effect.
If you don’t want a white thread, you can quickly color it by selecting the Pattern Fill layer and choosing Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Then, press OK. In Elements 7 and earlier, close the Hue/Saturation dialog box without making changes (skip this step in Elements 8). Now press Ctrl-G (Mac: Command-G) to clip the Hue/Saturation layer to the Pattern Fill layer so your changes will only affect the thread.

Double-click on the gear icon in the Hue/Saturation layer to bring up the dialog box again. Check the Colorize box and adjust the Lightness, Saturation, and Hue sliders to change the color as desired.

Save Time! Once you’ve designed your stitches, you can save time by reusing them in other projects. Save the stitches as flattened .PNG files without backgrounds. Then, you can pull them into your scrapbook pages, cards, and other digital projects at any time, modifying them as desired.

My finished digital stitch provides a border for visual interest, adds a subtle bit of texture and dimension to the project, and gives the illusion that the recipe card is attached to the patterned background by way of stitching—all without requiring a bandage. Best of all, I no longer covet my sister’s abilities with a sewing machine.

Liz Ness is a mixed-media artist and co-host of Illustrating Stories (http://illustratingstories.ning.com), a nurturing community of creatives with a passion for visual stories.
1. Open a new document with a transparent background. Add a new layer, and then press D to select the default foreground and background colors. With the *Type tool* (T), set the Font to Arial, the Style to Regular, and the Size to 72 pt. Click anywhere in the document and type a capital letter “V.”

2. To turn the shape into a brush, choose the *Rectangular Marquee tool* (M) and draw a selection around the V. Choose *Edit>Define Brush From Selection*, name the brush “Zigzag,” and then press OK. You can now close the document.

3. Open a document you want to embellish with the zigzag stitch. Create a new layer and press X to swap the default colors so that white is the foreground color. With the *Brush tool* (B) selected, choose the new V-shaped brush from the brush list (it should be the last one) and set the brush size to 50 px. In the Brush Dynamics pane, set the Spacing to 95 percent. For a vertical stitch, adjust the Angle to 90 degrees. Now, click once where you’d like to stitch to begin, and then *Shift-click* where you’d like the stitch to end.

4. To lay down your holes, create a new layer in the Layers palette, and then press X to swap the default colors again so that black is the foreground color. With the *Brush tool* still selected, choose the Hard Round 5 Pixel brush and set the size to 12 pixels. Return to the Brush Dynamics pane and change the Spacing to 364 percent (make sure the Hardness slider is set to 100 percent). Position the cursor at the beginning of the top of the zigzag line and click once to lay down a dot. Now *Shift-click* at the end of the line (again, on a point). A hole should appear over the top set of points on the white line. Create a new layer and add holes to the bottom set of points in the stitch to complete the effect.

Finally, follow the steps in the main tutorial—starting with Step 8—to add texture and color to the stitch.
2 Doors
Héctor F. Gerena
TRUJILLO ALTO, PUERTO RICO

This photo was taken on one of my walks in Philadelphia. I was experimenting with landscape and portrait shots when I saw these doors. The colors, the contrast, and that little detail of the newspaper really caught my attention.

This picture was processed in Elements 8 using Matt Kloskowski’s tip for creating a quick painterly effect (July/August 2010). I made one change from Matt’s technique, using a Multiply blend mode on the top layer.

Kansas Sunset
Doug Conrad
SIoux City, IOWA

After reading a tutorial on the Orton effect (January/February 2009), my mission was to try and capture a nice landscape image to give the technique a try. The photo was taken at my in-laws’ farm in Chapman, Kansas, on a hot summer evening, while using a fence post as my tripod. After performing some color adjustments in Photoshop Elements 6, I used the Orton effect to give it that rich glow.

Childhood Memories
Madelaine Cappuccio
RIDGEFIELD PARK, NEW JERSEY

Using a photo I took at our State Fair last year, I created a memory of Palisades Amusement Park. (This nationally known park in Clifton, N.J., had pop songs written about it.) I was playing around with Elements 5 one day and felt a little nostalgic, and voila! To get the final look, I used a few plug-ins, including Red Paw Media’s Technicolor and Beautifier, onOne Software’s PhotoFrame, and finished it off with Jellyka’s Saint-Andrew’s Queen font (available free on dafont.com).
Garden Play
Shirley Hallman
HARTESTE, ALABAMA

I took a number of shots of my six-year-old granddaughter, Kaitlyn, enjoying the courtyard garden where I work. I was having a hard time deciding which shot to print and frame until I received the May/June issue, featuring Diana Day’s “Filmstrip Photo Collage” which let me showcase seven photos at once.

Road to Hana
Joseph A. Sandrin
BAYSIDE, WISCONSIN

This was shot on the road to Hana, Maui, Hawaii, in April 2010 while on a family vacation. We had a beautiful day and stopped in a small bay that had some exquisite lava formations. The wind was strong from the north, pushing waves onto the shore. This shot is one of a series, and it worked especially well.

I had recently read the article on the Orton effect and thought this shot was a good candidate. I was ecstatic with the results.

Miley: Illustrated
Julia Murphy
SEYMOUR, INDIANA

This photo was taken of Miley, our two-month-old kitten. I edited the photo using the “Turn Photos into Illustrations” tutorial by Ben Long, which appeared in the March/April 2010 issue.

Defiance
Denis Robinson
WHITENERS, YUKON, CANADA

This image, of the Fort de la Calette Light, was shot on a recent trip I took to Northwest Africa. The original image was shot at sunrise, and the combination of the morning light and the ocean fog left the image quite timid and warm, in contrast to the raging Atlantic ocean that was smashing waves almost to the height of the 79-foot tower.

I opened the JPEG up in Camera Raw using the tip in Matt Kloskowski’s “Fairy-Tale High-Key Photo Effect” tutorial to make some adjustments, and desaturated the image. In Elements, I multiplied the image, dropped the opacity of the layer, and used the High Pass filter to sharpen the image.

Go to the Magazine Subscriber Gallery section in the Elements Village forums and read the message, “How to Submit Images to the P.E.T. Subscriber Showcase,” which has the info you’ll need to upload your photos. The next deadline is Oct. 8. www.ElementsVillage.com