Contents

1 Introducing Elements 7

About Elements 8
Welcome Screen 9
Photo Editor Workspace 10
Quick Edit Mode 12
Guided Edit Mode 13
Expert Edit Mode 14
Menu Bar 18
Preferences 19
Organizer Workspace 20
Create Mode 22
Share Mode 23
Getting Help 24

2 Organizing Images 25

Obtaining Images 26
Media View 28
Stacks 32
Version Sets 33
People View 34
Places View 36
Events View 38
Tagging Images 40
Searching for Images 42
Albums 46
Folders 47
Opening and Saving Images 48
Working with Video 49

3 First Digital Steps 51

Color Enhancements 52
Cropping 55
Cloning 58
Pattern Cloning 59
Healing Brush 60
Spot Healing Brush 61
Uncluttering a Photo 62
Rotating 64
Transforming 65
Magnification 66
Eraser 68

4 Quick Wins 69

Removing Red-eye 70
Content-Aware Editing 72
Changing to Black and White 74
Quick Edit Mode Options 76
Quick Edit Toolbox 77
Quick Edit Adjustments 78
Enhancing with Quick Edits 80
Using Guided Edit Mode 82
Photomerge Effects 84
Panoramas 86

5 Beyond the Basics 89

Hue and Saturation 90
Histogram 92
Levels 94
Quick and Guided Levels 96
Unsharp Mask 97
Importing RAW Images 98
Image Size 100
Resampling Images 102

6 Selecting Areas 103

About Selections 104
Marquee Tools 105

Lasso Tools 106
Magic Wand Tool 108
Selection Brush Tool 109
Quick Selection Tool 110
Smart Brush Tool 111
Inverting a Selection 112
Feathering 113
Editing Selections 114

7 Layers 115

Layering Images 116
Layers Panel 117
Adding Layers 118
Fill and Adjustment Layers 119
Working with Layers 121
Layer Masks 122
Opacity 125
Saving Layers 126

8 Text and Drawing Tools 127

Adding and Formatting Text 128
Customizing Text 130
Distorting Text 134
Text and Shape Masks 135
Adding Shapes 137
Paint Bucket Tool 138
Gradient Tool 139
Brush and Pencil Tools 141
Impressionist Brush Tool 142
Working with Color 143

9 Artistic Effects 145

About Graphics and Effects 146
Adding Filters 148
Zoom Burst 150
Depth of Field 152
Line Drawings 154
Photo Puzzles 156
Out of Bounds 158
Pop Art 162
Reflections 164

10 Sharing and Creating 167

About Share Mode 168
Mobile Sharing 170
Sharing with Adobe Revel 172
About Create Mode 173
Editing Creations 177

11 Printing Images 179

Print Size 180
Print Functions 181
Print Layouts 183
Online Prints 185
Creating PDF Files 186

Index 187

1 Introducing Elements

Photoshop Elements is a digital image editing program that comprehensively spans the gap between very basic programs and professional-level ones. This chapter introduces the various workspaces and modes of Elements and shows how to access and use them.

8 About Elements
9 Welcome Screen
10 Photo Editor Workspace
12 Quick Edit Mode
13 Guided Edit Mode
14 Expert Edit Mode
18 Menu Bar
19 Preferences
20 Organizer Workspace
22 Create Mode
23 Share Mode
24 Getting Help

About Elements

Photoshop Elements can be bought online from Adobe and computer and software sites, or at computer software stores. There are Windows and Mac versions of the program and with Elements 12 these are virtually identical. If Elements 12 is bought from the Adobe website, at www.adobe.com, it can be downloaded and installed directly from here. Otherwise it will be provided on a DVD, with a serial number that needs to be entered during installation.

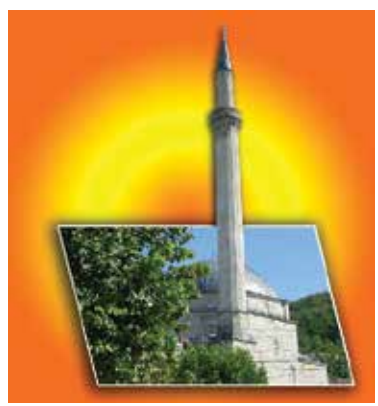
The New icon pictured above indicates a new or enhanced feature introduced with the latest version of Photoshop Elements 12.

Photoshop Elements is the offspring of the professional-level image-editing program, Photoshop. Photoshop is somewhat unusual in the world of computer software, in that it is widely accepted as being the best program of its type on the market. If professional designers or photographers are using an image-editing program, it will almost certainly be Photoshop. However, two of the potential drawbacks to Photoshop are its cost and its complexity. This is where Elements comes into its own. Adobe (the maker of Photoshop and Elements) has recognized that the majority of digital imaging users (i.e. the consumer market) want something with the basic power of Photoshop, but with enough user-friendly features to make it easy to use. With the explosion in the digital camera market, a product was needed to meet the needs of a new generation of image editors – and that product is Elements.

Elements contains the same powerful editing/color management tools as the full version of Photoshop and it also includes a number of versatile features for sharing images and for creating artistic projects, such as slide shows, cards, calendars and online photo albums. It also has valuable features, such as the Guided edit and Quick edit modes, where you can quickly apply editing techniques and follow step-by-step processes to achieve a range of creative and artistic effects.

Special effects

One of the great things about using Elements with digital images is that it provides numerous fun and creative options for turning mediocre images into eye-catching works of art. This is achieved through a wide variety of guided activities within Guided edit mode, which have been added to and enhanced in Elements 12.



Advanced features

In addition to user-friendly features, Elements also has an Expert editing mode where you can use a range of advanced features, including a full set of tools for editing and color adjustments.

Welcome Screen

When you first open Elements, you will be presented with the Welcome Screen. This offers initial advice about working with Elements and also provides options for accessing the different workspaces. The Welcome Screen appears by default but this can be altered once you become more familiar with Elements.

Welcome Screen functions

1. Options for organizing photos, editing them and using them in a variety of creative ways

2. Click on the **Organizer** button to go to that area

3. Click on the **Photo Editor** button to go to that area

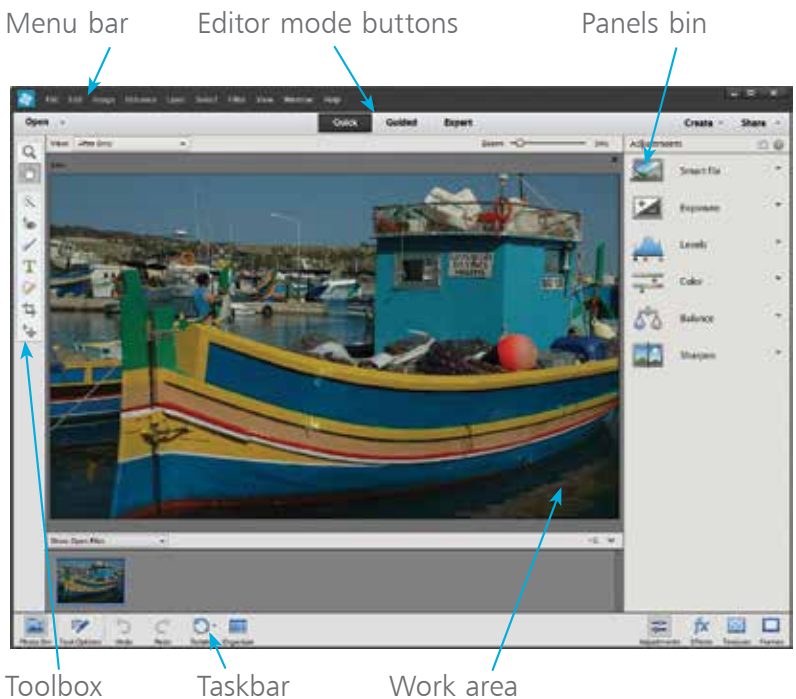
The Welcome Screen can be accessed at any time by selecting **Help > Welcome Screen** from the Photo Editor or Organizer Menu bar. Click on this button at the top of the Welcome Screen to select options for what happens when Elements is launched.

Photo Editor Workspace

From the Welcome Screen the Photo Editor workspace can be accessed. This is a combination of the work area (where images are opened and edited), menus, toolbars, toolboxes and panels. At first it can seem a little daunting, but Elements has been designed with three different editing modes to give you as many options as possible for editing your photos.

The components of the Photo Editor (Editor) are:

In Elements 12 all of the workspaces have been designed to give them a clearer appearance and make navigation easier.

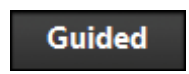


Editor modes

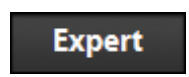
The three different modes in the Photo Editor are accessed from the buttons at the top of the Elements window. They are:

- **Quick edit mode.** This can be used to perform quick editing options in one step

- **Guided edit mode.** This can be used to perform a range of editing techniques in a step-by-step process for each



- **Expert edit mode.** This can be used for the ultimate control over the editing process



Taskbar and Tool Options

The Taskbar is the group of buttons that is available across all three Editor modes at the bottom left of the Elements window:

One of the options on the Taskbar is the Tool Options. This displays the available options for any tool selected from the Toolbox (different tools are available in each of the different Editor modes). To use this:

1. Select a tool and click on the **Tool Options** button to show or hide the Tool Options panel (by default it is visible when a tool is first selected). Other tools within specific sets can also be selected within the Tool Options panel

Project Bin

The Project Bin is another feature that can be accessed from all three Editor modes. The Project Bin enables you to quickly access all of the images that you have open within the Editor. To use the Project Bin:

1. Open two or more images. The most recently-opened one will be the one that is active in the Editor window

2. All open images are shown here in the Project Bin

3. Double-click on an image in the Project Bin to make that the active one for editing

The items on the Taskbar are, from left to right, show or hide the Photo Bin, show or hide the Tool Options panel, undo the previous actions, redo any undone actions, rotate the active photo and access the Organizer. In Expert mode there is also an option to change the Layout.

Images can also be made active for editing by dragging them directly from the Project Bin and dropping them within the Editor window.

When an image has started to be edited, this icon appears on its top right-hand corner in the Project Bin.

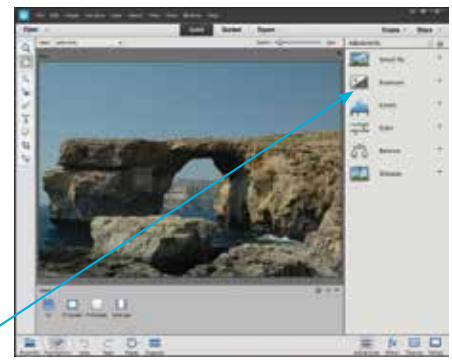
Quick Edit Mode

Quick edit mode contains a number of functions that can be selected from panels and applied to an image, without the need to manually apply all of the commands. To do this:

For a more detailed look at Quick edit mode, have a look at Chapter Four.

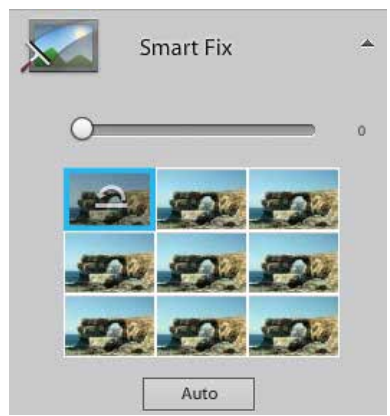
1. In the Editor, click on the **Quick** button

2. The currently-active image is displayed within the Quick edit window. This has the standard Taskbar and Photo Bin and a reduced Toolbox. Click here to access the Quick edit panels

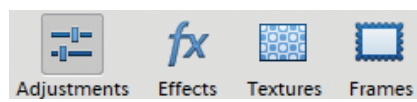


Move the cursor over one of the thumbnails to view a real-time preview of the effect on the open image. Click on one of the thumbnails to apply the effect.

3. Select one of the commands to have it applied to the active image. This can be applied either by clicking on one of the thumbnail options or by dragging the appropriate slider at the top of the panel



4. Click on these buttons at the bottom of the Quick Edit panel to select **Adjustments**, **Effects**, **Textures** and **Frames** options for adding to photos

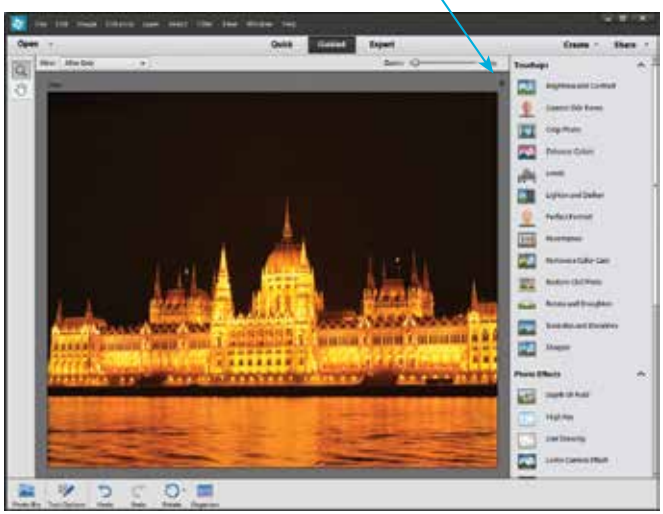


Guided Edit Mode

Guided edit mode focuses on common tasks for editing digital images and shows you how to perform them with a step-by-step process. To use Guided edit mode:

1. In the Editor, click on the **Guided** button

2. The currently-active image is displayed within the Guided edit window. This has the standard Taskbar and Photo Bin but only two tools in the Toolbox. The Guided edit options are available in the right-hand panel



3. Select one of the actions that you want to perform. This will take you to a step-by-step process for undertaking the selected action

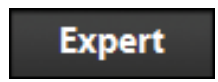
Guided edit mode is a great place to start if you are new to image editing, or feel unsure about anything to do with it.

The tools in the Guided edit mode Toolbox are the Zoom tool for magnifying an image and the Hand tool for moving around.

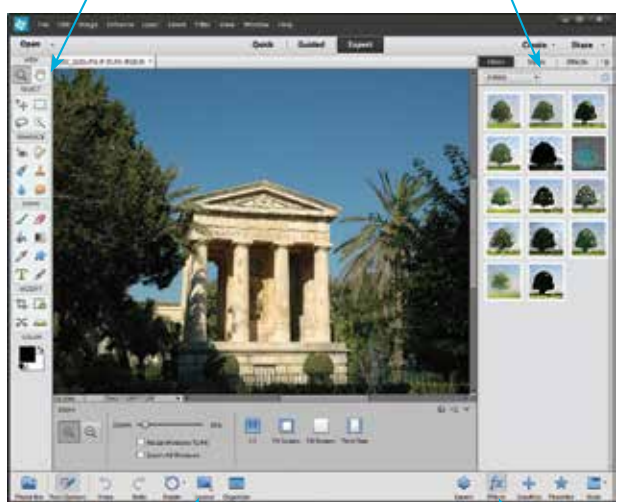
Expert Edit Mode

Expert edit mode is where you can take full editing control over your photos. It has a range of powerful editing tools so that you can produce subtle and impressive effects. To use Expert mode:

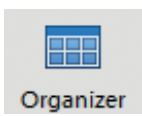
1. In the Editor, click on the **Expert** button



2. The full range of editing tools is available



The Organizer can be accessed from any of the Editor modes by clicking on this button on the Taskbar:



The **Layout** button is the one addition on the Taskbar within Expert mode, as opposed to Quick and Guided edit modes. Click on the **Layout** button to access options for display of open photos within the Editor window

The Expert Toolbox

The Toolbox in Expert mode contains tools for applying a wide range of editing techniques. Some of the tools have more than one option. To see if a tool has additional options:

1. Move the cursor over the **Toolbox**. Tools that have additional options appear with a small arrow in the top right-hand corner of their icons. Click on a tool to view the options within the Tool Options panel

The tools that have additional options are: Marquee, Lasso, Quick Selection, Healing Brush, Type, Smart Brush, Eraser, Brush, Stamp, Shape, Blur and Sponge.

The default Toolbox tools are (keyboard shortcut in brackets):

Zoom (Z) — Hand (H)

Move (V) — Rectangular Marquee (M)

Lasso (L) — Quick Selection (A)

Red Eye Removal (Y) — Spot Healing Brush (J)

Smart Brush (F) — Clone Stamp (S)

Blur (R) — Sponge (O)

Brush (B) — Eraser (E)

Paint Bucket (K) — Gradient (G)

Color Picker (I) — Custom Shape (U)

Horizontal Type (T) — Pencil (N)

Crop (C) — Recompose (W)

Content-Aware (Q) — Straighten (K)

Foreground Color — Background Color

Keyboard shortcuts can be used by pressing the Shift key and the appropriate letter.

If the Toolbox is not visible, select **Window > Tools** from the Editor Menu bar.

...cont'd

Panels

In Expert edit mode, Elements uses panels to group together similar editing functions and provide quick access to certain techniques. The available panels are:

- **Actions.** This can be used to perform automated actions over a group of images at the same time.
- **Adjustments.** This can be used to add or make editing changes to adjustment layers in the Layers panel.
- **Color Swatches.** This is a panel for selecting colors that can then be applied to parts of an image or elements that have been added to it.
- **Effects.** This contains special effects and styles that can be applied to an entire image or a selected part of an image. There are also filters which have their own dialog boxes in which settings can be applied and adjusted. Layer Styles can also be applied to elements within an image.
- **Favorites.** This is where favorite graphical elements from the Content panel can be stored and retrieved quickly.
- **Graphics.** This contains graphical elements that can be added to images, including backgrounds, frame shapes and text.
- **Histogram.** This displays a graph of the tonal range of the colors in an image. It is useful for assessing the overall exposure of an image and it changes as an image is edited.
- **History.** This can be used to undo any editing steps that have been performed. Every action is displayed and can be reversed by dragging the slider next to the most recent item.
- **Info.** This displays information about an image, or a selected element within it. This includes details about the color in an image or the position of a certain item.
- **Layers.** This enables several layers to be included within an image. This can be useful if you want to add elements to an existing image, such as shapes or text.
- **Navigator.** This can be used to move around an image and magnify certain areas of it.

The panels are located in the Panel Bin, which is at the right of the Editor window. In Expert edit mode this can be collapsed or expanded by selecting **Window > Panel Bin** from the Menu bar.

Working with panels

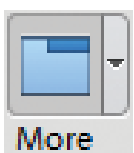
The default Expert edit mode panels (Layers, Effects, Graphics and Favorites) are located at the right-hand side of the Taskbar. Additional panels can also be accessed from here too. To work with panels in Expert edit mode:

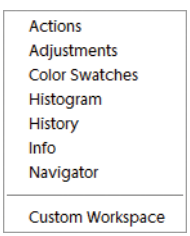
1. Click on one of the panel buttons on the Taskbar to open the related panel

2. If there are additional tabs for a panel click on the tab to view the other options

Click here to access the menu for an open panel.

3. Click on the **More** button to view the rest of the available panels





Do not have too many panels open at one time. If you do, the screen will become cluttered and it will be difficult to edit images effectively.

4. The additional panels are grouped together. Click on a tab to access the required panel. Click and drag on a tab to move the panel away from the rest of the group

Menu Bar

In the Editor, the Menu bar contains menus that provide all of the functionality for the workings of Elements. Some of these functions can also be achieved through the use of the other components of Elements, such as the Toolbox, the Tool Options panel and the panels. However, the Menu bar is where all of the commands needed for the digital editing process can be accessed in one place.

Menu bar menus

- **File.** This has standard commands for opening, saving and printing images.
- **Edit.** This contains commands for undoing previous operations, and standard copy-and-paste techniques.
- **Image.** This contains commands for altering the size, shape and position of an image. It also contains more advanced functions, such as changing the color mode of an image.
- **Enhance.** This contains commands for editing the color elements of an image. It also contains quick-fix options and commands for creating Photomerge effects such as panoramas and combining exposures.
- **Layer.** This contains commands for working with different layers within an image.
- **Select.** This contains commands for working with areas that have been selected within an image, with one of the selection tools in the Toolbox.
- **Filter.** This contains numerous filters that can be used to apply special effects to an image.
- **View.** This contains commands for changing the size at which an image is displayed, and also options for showing or hiding rulers and grid lines.
- **Window.** This contains commands for changing the way multiple images are displayed, and also options for displaying the components of Elements.
- **Help.** This contains the various Help options.

Although the Menu bar menus are all available in each of the Editor modes, some of the menu options are not available in Quick edit or Guided edit mode.

Elements does not support the CMYK color model for editing digital images. This could be an issue if you use a commercial printer.

The Mac version of Elements also has a Photoshop Elements menu on the Menu bar. This contains the Preferences options.

Preferences

A number of preferences can be set within Elements to determine the way the program operates. It is perfectly acceptable to leave all of the default settings as they are, but as you become more familiar with the program you may want to change some of the preference settings. Preferences can be accessed by selecting **Edit > Preferences** from the Menu bar (**Adobe Photoshop Elements Editor > Preferences** in the Mac version). The available ones are:

- **General.** This contains a variety of options for selecting items, such as shortcut keys.
- **Saving Files.** This determines the way Elements saves files.
- **Performance.** This determines how Elements allocates memory when processing editing tasks. It also determines how Elements allocates disk space when processing editing tasks (scratch disks). If you require more memory for editing images you can do this by allocating up to four scratch disks on your hard drive. These act as extra areas from which memory can be used during the editing process.
- **Display & Cursors.** This determines how cursors operate when certain tools are selected.
- **Transparency.** This determines the color, or transparency, of the background on which an open image resides.
- **Units & Rulers.** This determines the unit of measurement used by items, such as rulers.
- **Guides & Grids.** This determines the color and format of any guides and grids that are used.
- **Plug-Ins.** This displays any plug-ins that have been downloaded to enhance image editing with Elements.
- **Type.** This determines the way text appears when it is added to images.
- **Organize & Share.** These preferences open in Organizer mode and offer a collection of options for each function. These are General, Files, Editing, Camera or Card Reader, Scanner, Keyword Tags and Albums, Sharing, Adobe Sharing Services, Media-Analysis and Adobe Revel for online sharing.

Each preference has its own dialog box in which the specific preference settings can be made.

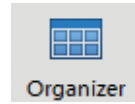
A scratch disk is an area of temporary storage on the hard drive that can be utilized if the available memory (RAM) has been used up.

Guides and grids can be accessed from the View menu in Editor mode.

Organizer Workspace

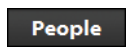
The Organizer workspace contains functions for sorting, viewing and finding multiple images. To use the Organizer:

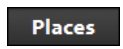
1. In any of the Editor modes, click on the **Organizer** button on the Taskbar

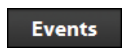


The Organizer has four views, accessed from these buttons:

- Media View

- People View 

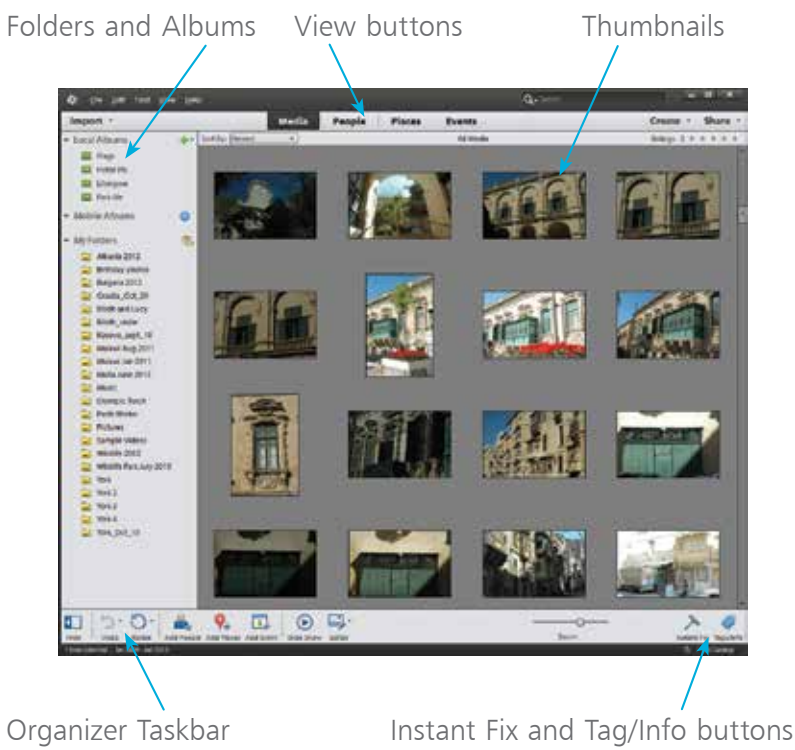
- Places View 

- Events View 

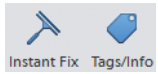
Images displayed in the Media View can be located anywhere on your computer. The thumbnails in Media View are just references to the originals, wherever they are stored.

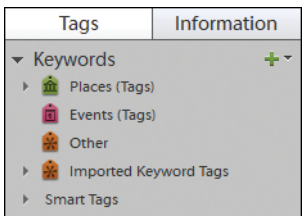
Media View

The Media View displays thumbnails of your photos, and also has functions for sorting and finding images:



Click on these buttons to apply image-editing effects to a selected image in Media View, or view the Tags and Information panels.





People View

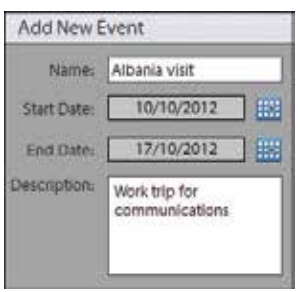
This view can be used to tag specific people and then view photos with those people in them.

Places View

This view can be used to place photos on a map so that they can be searched for by location.

Events View

This view can be used to group photos according to specific events such as birthdays and vacations.



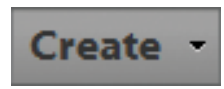
For information about using the Organizer, and its different views, see Chapter Two.

Create Mode

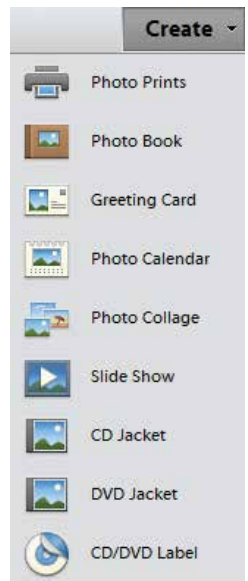
Create mode is where you can release your artistic flair and start designing items such as photo books and photo collages. It can also be used to create slide shows and to put your images onto discs. To use Create mode:

For a more detailed look at Create mode have a look at pages 173-176.

1. In either the Editor or the Organizer, click on the **Create** button



2. Select one of the Create projects. Each project has a wizard that takes you through the create process



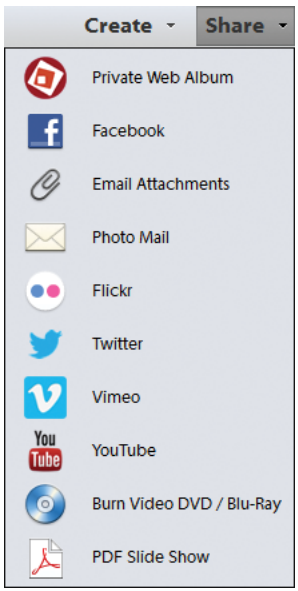
3. The Create wizard takes you through the process so you can display your photos in a variety of creative ways

Share Mode

Share mode can be used to distribute your images to family and friends in a number of creative ways. To use Share mode:

1. In the Organizer, click on the **Share** button

2. Select one of the Share options, such as sharing to social networking sites, sharing via email or the Adobe Revel photo-sharing service which is accessed through the Private Web Album option



For a more detailed look at Share mode see pages 168-172.

3. In previous versions of Elements, the Share function was only available from the Organizer. However, in Elements 12 there are also some share options that can be accessed from the Editor

Getting Help

One of the differences between Elements and the full version of Photoshop is the amount of assistance and guidance offered by each program. Since Photoshop is aimed more at the professional end of the market, the level of help is confined largely to the standard help directory that serves as an online manual. Elements also contains this, but in addition it has the Getting Started option which is designed to take users through the digital image editing process as smoothly as possible. The Getting Started option offers general guidance about digital imaging techniques and there are also help items that can be accessed by selecting Help from the Menu bar. These include online help, information on available plug-ins for Elements, tutorials and support details.

Using the help files

1 Select **Photoshop Elements Help** from the **Help** menu and click on an item to display it in the main window. Use the left-hand panel to view the different help categories