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Photoshop® Elements 7

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Kate Binder

EASY ADOBE® PHOTOSHOP® ELEMENTS 7

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I love Photoshop Elements, I really do.

Now, that's a statement that might surprise people who know me—in other words, people who know that I make a lot of my living working with “Big Photoshop” and its professional-level siblings in Adobe's powerful Creative Suite. Nonetheless, Photoshop Elements has a special place in my heart. And I'm sure you'll feel the same way by the time you've finished reading this book.

Look at it this way. You've got a digital camera (and probably a scanner, too). You've got this desktop PC that's hundreds—no, thousands—of times more powerful than the computers of just a few decades ago. Maybe you even have a cell phone that can take photos. How about your PDA? I bet it can do the same.

You've got all the gadgets. But let's face it; one thing you don't have is a lot of time.

And if you did find some time, you'd pick up a real book by Elizabeth Peters or Tom Clancy, kick back, and enjoy yourself.

Who wants to read about computers?

Not me, that's for sure. I'm a lot like you. I love my digital camera. I look forward to sharing my pictures, but I don't want to spend hours “playing” with them. I spend enough time sitting at a computer when I'm working—when it comes to my family photos, vacation snapshots, and eBay listing photos, I just want to get them looking good as quickly as possible so that I can get on with my life.

And that's exactly where Photoshop Elements fits into my plans. Now, I'm a huge fan of Big Photoshop's power and breadth of features. It's just that, as mentioned earlier, I don't feel like getting out the big guns after hours. But I'm used to the power of Photoshop—after all, it's the industry standard image editor, and there's just not much it can't do. Given that, is it really possible for Photoshop Elements to keep me happy?

The answer, it turns out, is emphatically yes. With Photoshop Elements, you get maximum results with minimum effort. And version 7 offers more of the same, only better, with three different edit modes, including Guided Edit, which actually teaches you how to use Photoshop Elements right in the program. Photoshop Elements 7 also includes the following:

- A Smart Brush tool that enables you to paint in special effects on separate layers so that you can edit them later
- A Detail Smart Brush that's especially designed for working in small areas without slopping outside the lines
- An enhanced Organizer where you can create photo albums that automatically update your Web galleries when you import appropriate photos and that can back themselves up, too
- The new Photoshop.com Web service, a free way to share your photos online, access and edit your photos from any Web browser, and back up your photos instantly, so that you never risk losing a single pixel

In addition, a pack of built-in wizards do all the heavy lifting involved in creating everything from photo album pages and greeting cards to wall calendars and Web galleries.

So, here's hoping that you love Photoshop Elements as much as I do—and that this book enables you to use the program to create images you'll love even more.

May you enjoy this book, thrill as I did at the tricks you can do with Photoshop Elements, and not spend a minute more than you need to with either of them.

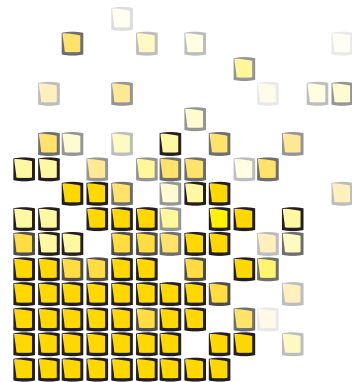


CREATING SNAZZY EFFECTS

With the invention of the electronic calculator, schoolchildren are the only ones who fret over doing arithmetic by hand. Similarly, you might be surprised at how many commercial artists don't draw from scratch anymore. Many of them earn their daily bread using computer graphics software such as Photoshop Elements to make photos look like fine art.

When you've worked through the tasks in this Part, you'll know many of their secrets. You can make greeting cards and party invitations look as if they were hand-drawn by a skilled sketch artist, create photorealistic illustrations for flyers and newsletters, and add expensive-looking graphics that give a professional touch to your personal Website.

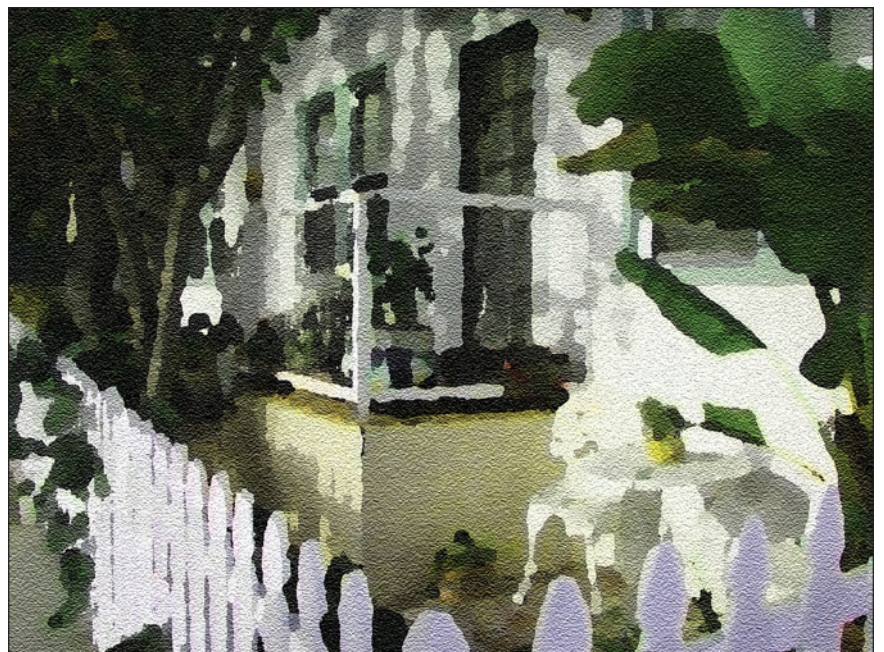
Photoshop Elements helps you achieve artistic effects by way of *filters* that can transform an image with a click, but in complex ways. The program comes with a wide variety of filters, and you can download even more of them (called plug-ins) from www.adobe.com and other vendors' Websites. There are far too many filters to cover them all here, but you'll see enough to show you how easy they are to apply—and to start you thinking about all the creative possibilities.



HOW DID YOU DO THAT?



Before It helps to start with a photo that has an interesting composition, and some bright colors and contrasts.

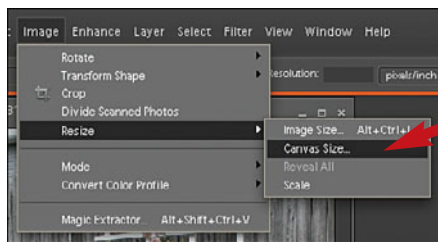


After Here's some "fine art" that took less than a minute to make. It's the result of adding both the Palette Knife artistic filter and a Sandstone texture, and finally adjusting Hue for brighter greenery.

ADDING A DECORATIVE BORDER

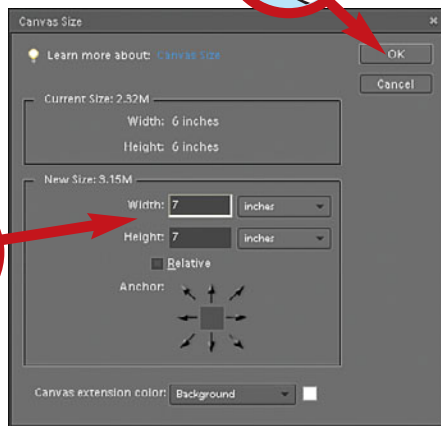
A frame is just one example of the wide variety of custom, prebuilt shapes available in Photoshop Elements. To make the frame even fancier, this example applies a Craquelure filter to give the frame a rich, dimensional look.

Start



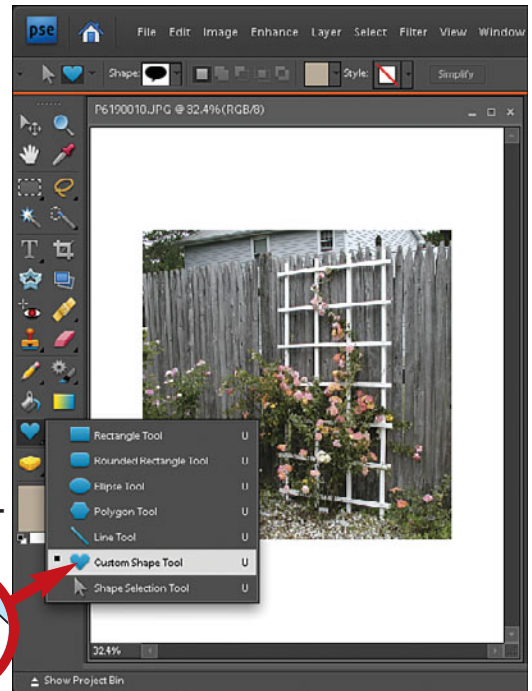
1 Click

2 Keyboard



3 Click

4 Right-click



- 1 With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose **Image, Resize, Canvas Size**.
- 2 Type a Width the same as the print size and about 2 inches wider than the current image size. Do the same for Height.
- 3 Click **OK**.
- 4 Right-click the **Shape** tool in the toolbar and choose **Custom Shape Tool**.

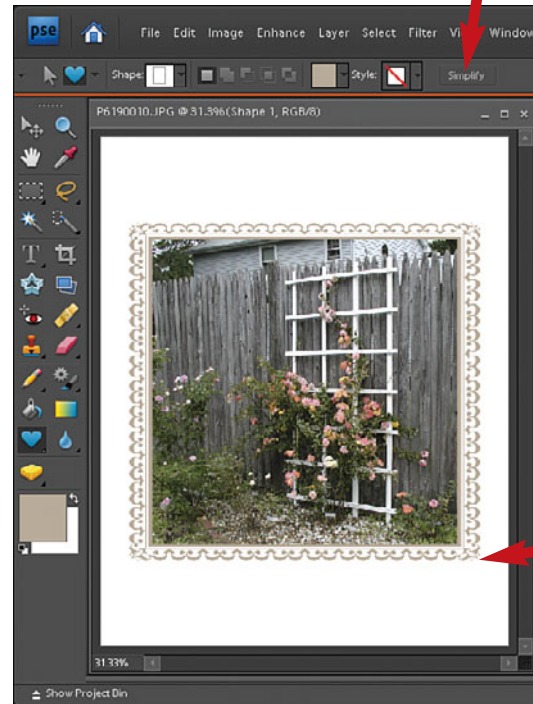
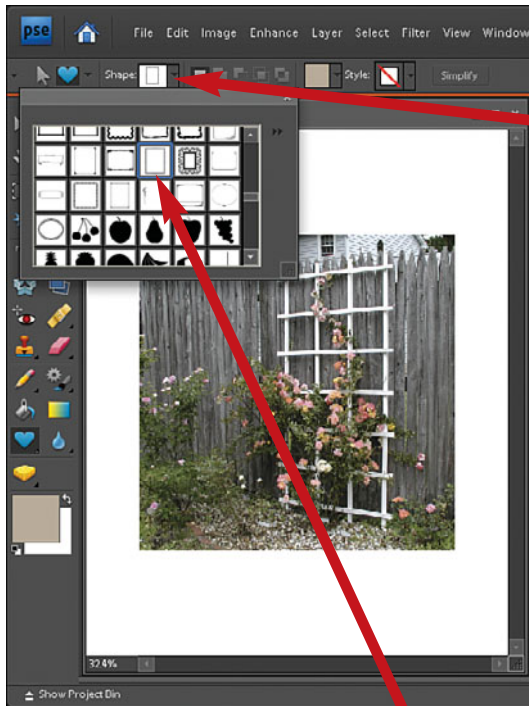
Continued



NOTE

Know the Image Size

In this example, the image size of the photo is about 5 × 7 inches. Placing it on an 8 × 10 canvas adds just the right amount of border for the decorative frame.



- 5** In the options bar, open the Shape pop-up palette.
- 6** Double-click any Frame shape.
- 7** With the Foreground color set to the color you want the frame to be, click and drag in the image to surround the photo with the frame.
- 8** Click the **Simplify** button.

Continued



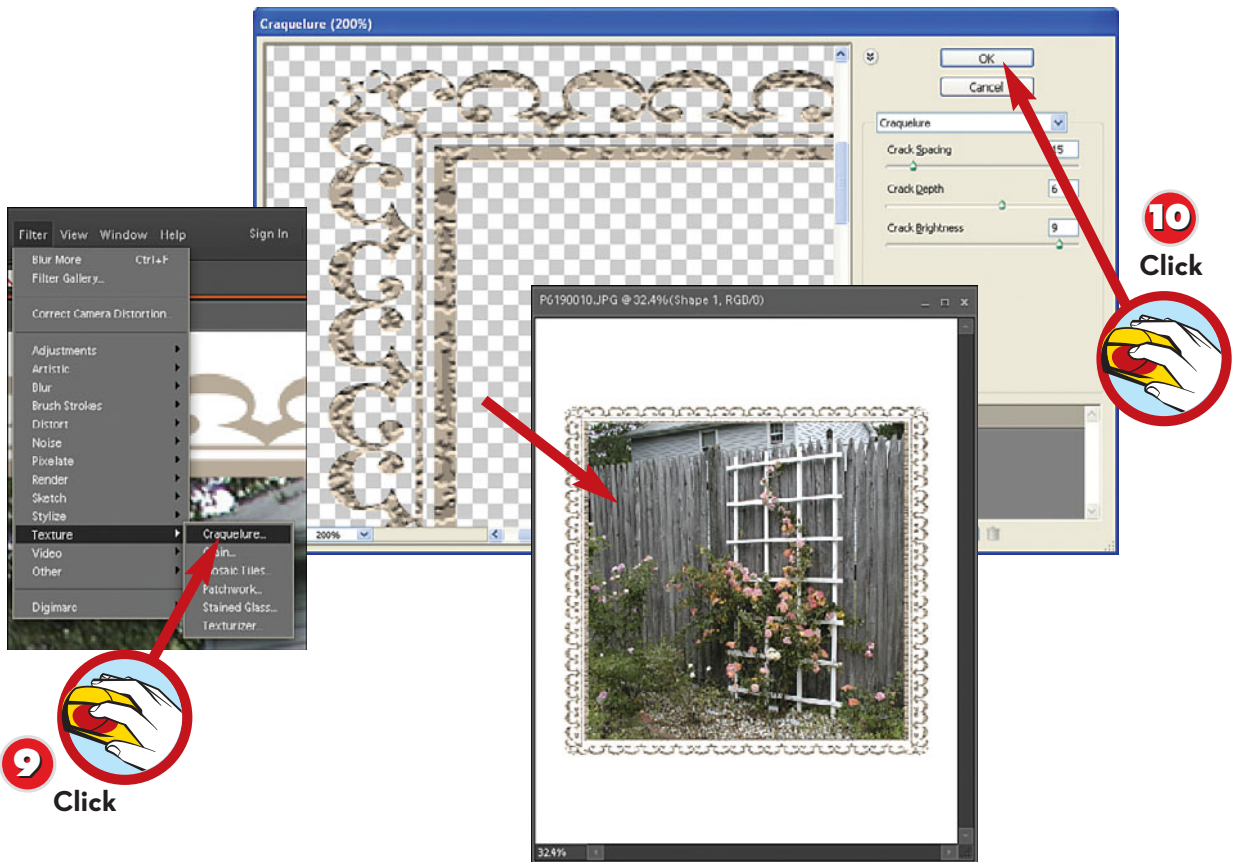
TIP

Want More Custom Shapes?

To pick from a variety of frame shapes, when the Shape pop-up palette is open in steps 5 and 6, click the circular arrow button and choose **All Elements Shapes** from the pop-up menu.



The frame used here is just one of many Custom Shapes, which are ready-made so that you don't have to do any freehand drawing. Categories include Animals, Arrows, Banners and Awards, Characters, Default, Frames, Fruit, Music, Nature, Objects, Ornaments, Shapes, Signs, Symbols, Talk Bubbles, and Tiles.



9 Choose **Filter, Texture, Craquelure**.

10 Click **OK** again.

End



TIP

Craquelure Not Your Style?

Instead of applying the Craquelure filter in step 9, try any other effect or combination of effects from the Filter menu.



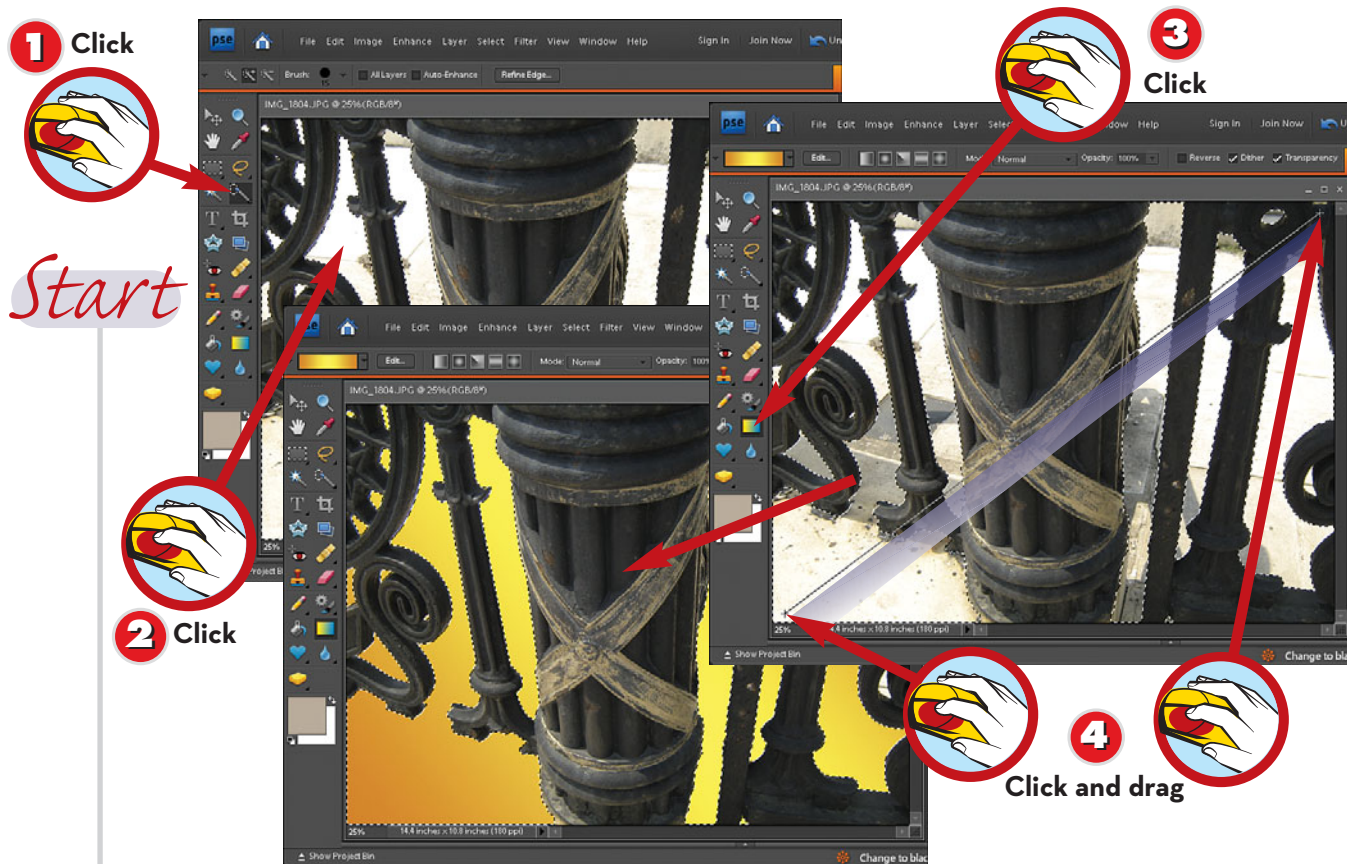
TIP

Don't See the Preview?

For the preview of the whole frame to be visible in the Craquelure dialog box in step 10, click the - button several times to reduce the view percentage from 100% to 14%.

CREATING A GRADIENT FILL

A *gradient fill* is a blended transition—usually between two colors—within a selected area. In this example, the gradient is applied to the entire background, but it could also be used to fill any object you select, even hollow text.



- 1 With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose the **Quick Selection** tool, or press **A**.
- 2 Click to select the area in the image to which the effect will be applied.
- 3 Choose the **Gradient** tool, or press **G**.
- 4 Click and drag across the area to be filled in the direction you want the color gradation to take. (Press **Ctrl+D** to release the selection.)

End



TIP

Making Your Selection

Use any combination of selection tools in step 1 (Magic Wand, Lassos, or Marquees). Press **Shift** as you select with a tool to add an area to the current selection, **Alt** to subtract.



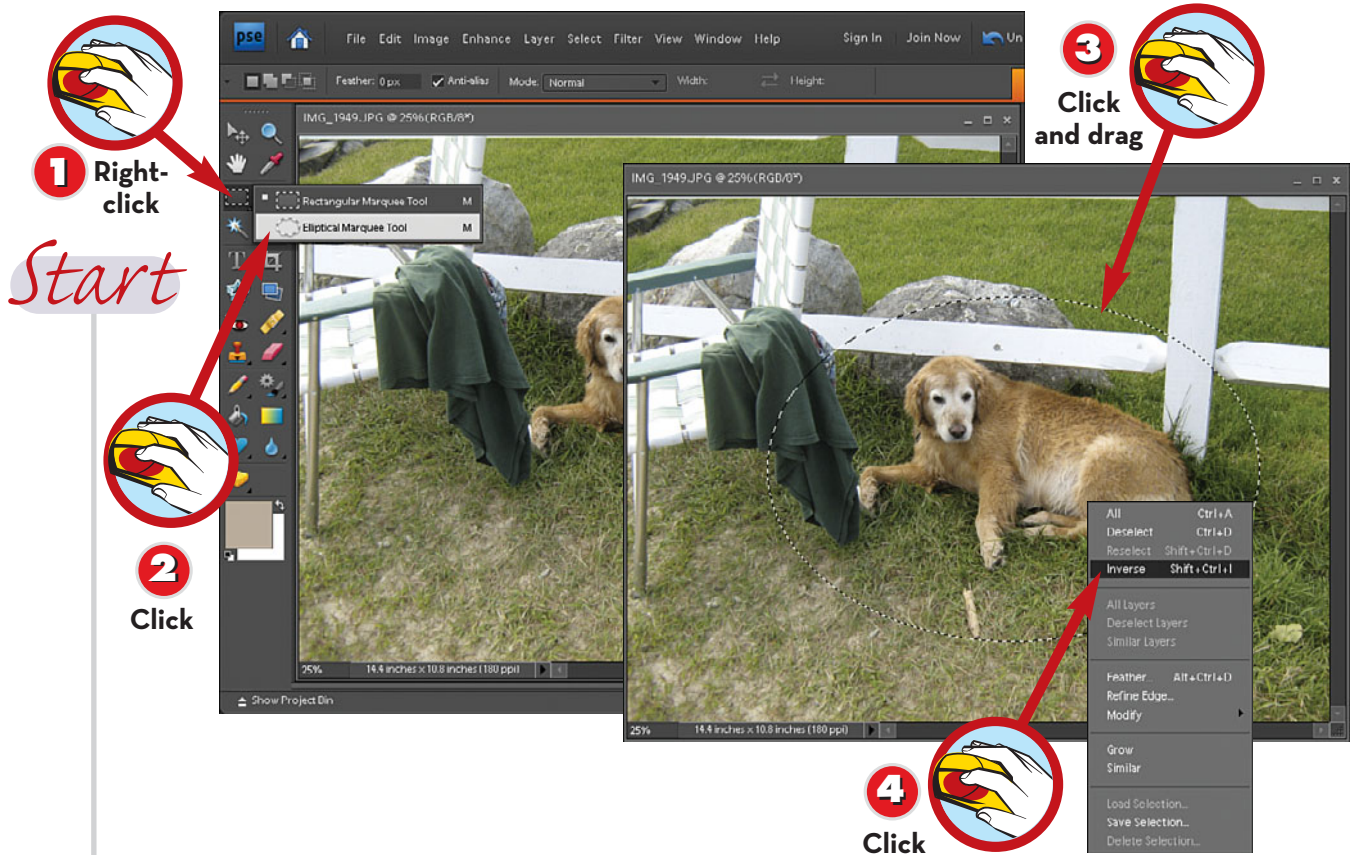
TIP

Mix Your Own Gradients

After switching to the Gradient tool, clicking the **Edit** button in the options bar opens the Gradient Editor, which contains options for creating custom gradients.

ADDING A VIGNETTE TO A PORTRAIT

Somehow, putting a soft edge around the subject of a portrait just seems to make the image more special. It's a traditional darkroom technique that's incredibly easy to emulate with Photoshop Elements.



- 1 With a picture open, right-click the **Rectangular Marquee** tool.
- 2 Choose the **Elliptical Marquee** tool.
- 3 Click and drag in the image to draw an oval selection marquee.
- 4 Choose **Select, Inverse** or press **Shift+Ctrl+I**.

Continued



TIP

Keep Trying

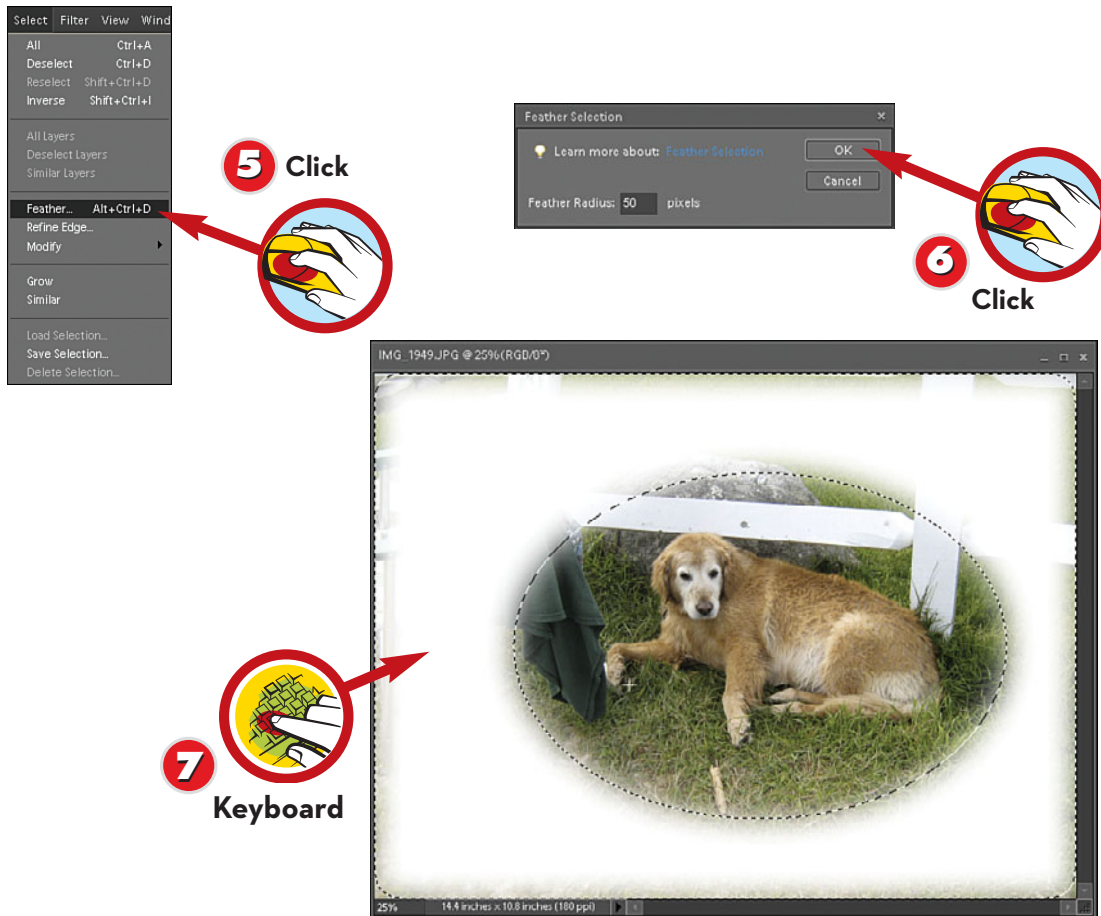
The amount of feathering you add depends on the resolution and size of the image; you might have to try a few different settings before you're satisfied. Don't forget that you can use the Undo History palette to back up and try again.



NOTE

Getting in Shape

Don't feel that you have to stick to creating an oval vignette—that's just the most traditional shape. Experiment with other shapes, including using the Lasso tool to draw a freeform selection.



- 5** Choose **Select, Feather** or press **Alt+Ctrl+D**.
- 6** Enter a number of pixels in the Feather Radius field and click **OK**.
- 7** Press **Delete** to remove the background.

End



NOTE

Going Way, Way Back

For a really old-fashioned feel, combine this vignette effect with a sepia tone effect. Check out the tip on **p. 204** for instructions.



TIP

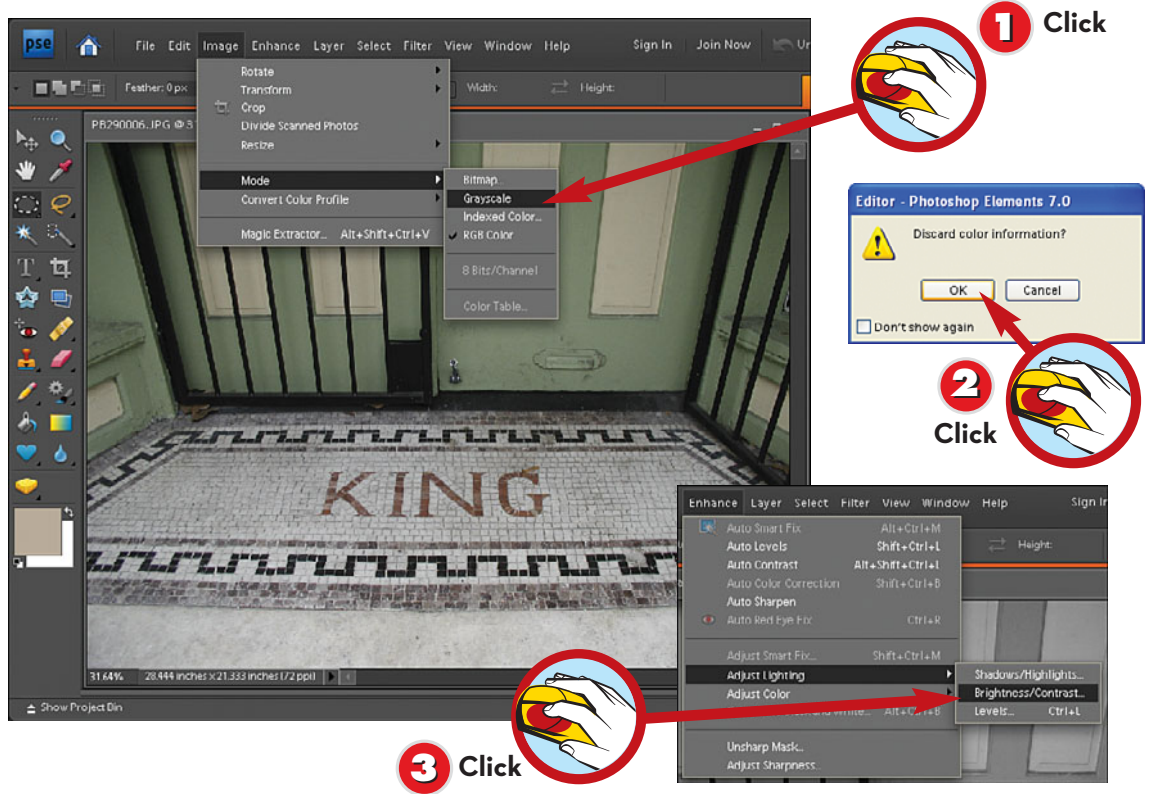
Tidying Up

To center the vignетted photo in the image, invert the selection after step 7 and choose **Image, Crop**. That gets rid of the photo's asymmetrical white border.

CREATING A HIGH-CONTRAST BLACK-AND-WHITE PICTURE

Back in the ancient days of film, high-contrast (hi-con) transparencies were called *Kodaliths*, the name of a Kodak product for mastering printing plates. You can create some dramatic artistic effects doing the same thing digitally—by converting a photo to black-and-white, with no shading.

Start



- 1** With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose **Image, Mode, Grayscale**.
- 2** Click **OK** on the warning dialog box.
- 3** Choose **Enhance, Adjust Lighting, Brightness/Contrast**.

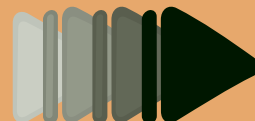
Continued

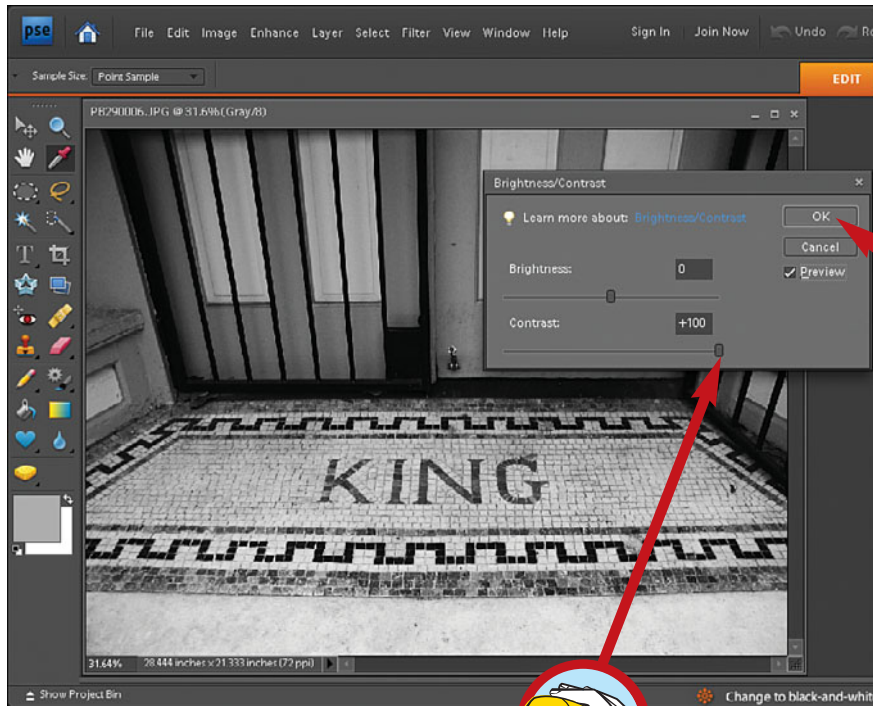


NOTE

Don't Do This to Your Dad

Hi-con doesn't make flattering portraits. Clean-shaven men with five o'clock shadow end up with real stubble trouble, and wispy laugh lines become deep trenches.





4

Click
and drag

5

Click

4 Adjust the **Contrast** slider to **100**.

5 Click **OK**.

End



TIP

Adjust Brightness

In step 4, after increasing Contrast, it might also be necessary to adjust the Brightness slider a bit, as done here.



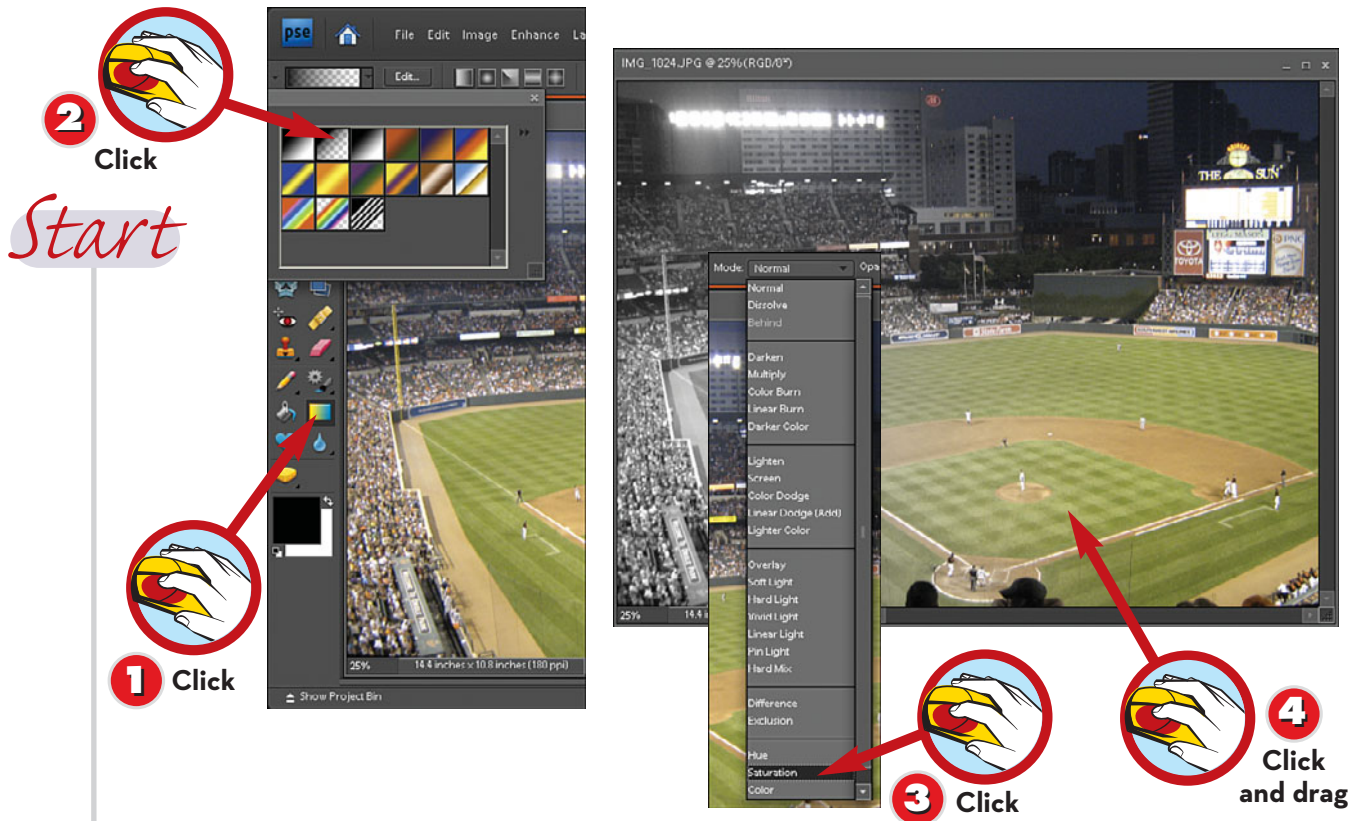
NOTE

Consider the Source

Hi-con effects work best on images with smooth surfaces and sharp edges, such as architectural views. If the source photo has shaded areas, keep the Contrast setting below 80% to preserve some grayscale.

FADING OUT COLOR

You'll often see this effect used in advertising—it's a neat way to convey the idea of an object moving from the past to the present, or from a humdrum world into an exciting one. One side of the image is black and white, and the other side is full color, with a smooth transition between the two modes in the middle.



- 1** Click to choose the **Gradient** tool, or press **G**.
- 2** Making sure that the foreground color is black, choose the **Foreground to Transparent** gradient in the options bar.
- 3** Choose **Saturation** from the Mode pop-up menu on the options bar.
- 4** Click and drag horizontally across the middle of the photo.

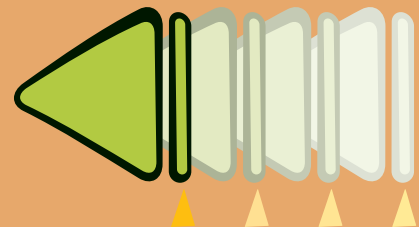
End



NOTE

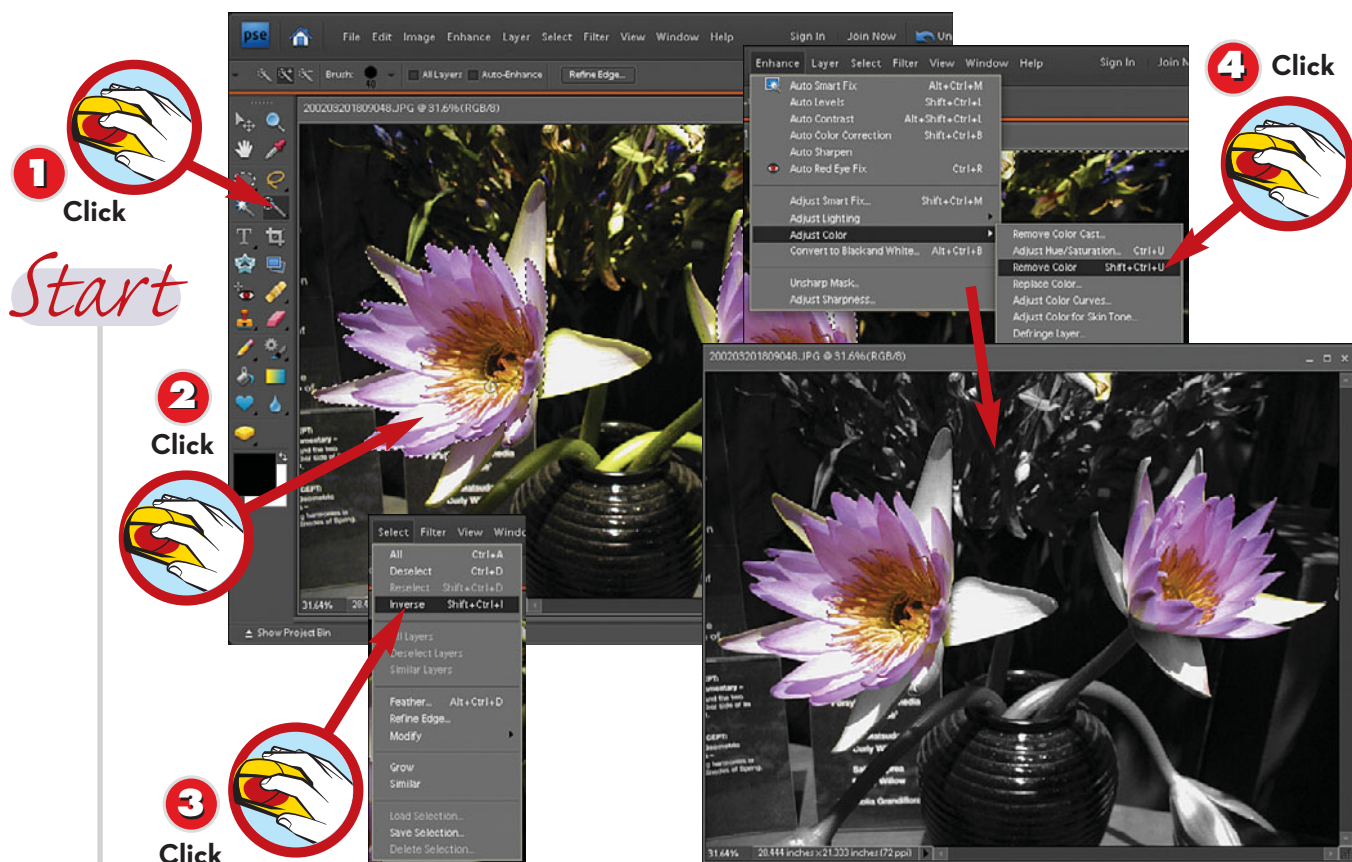
Messing Around

Try different Mode settings and different gradients to see what other interesting results you can come up with. You can also set the Gradient tool to generate one of the four other gradient shapes, such as radial.



COLORING A SINGLE OBJECT

Remember the striking image of the little girl's pink coat in the black and white movie *Schindler's List*? One color object really stands out against a black-and-white background. Here's how to achieve that effect in your own photos.



- 1** Click to choose the **Selection Brush**.
- 2** With the **Selection Brush**, paint over the object you want to leave in color.
- 3** After the selection is made, choose **Select, Inverse**.
- 4** Choose **Enhance, Adjust Color, Remove Color** or press **Shift+Ctrl+U**.

End



TIP

Bonus Points

For an extra color boost, choose **Enhance, Adjust Color, Adjust Hue/Saturation** after step 2. Drag the **Saturation** slider to the right to make the one colored object even more vivid.



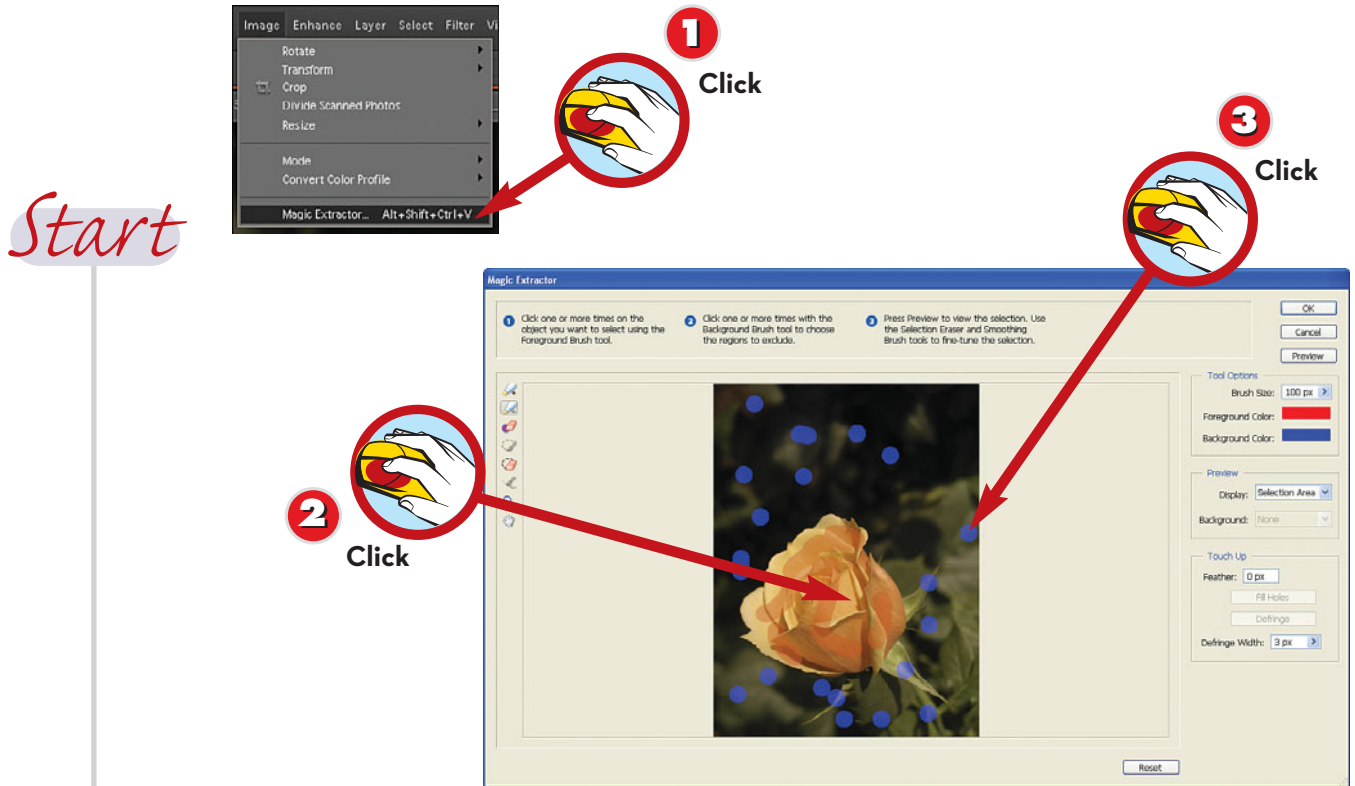
NOTE

It's All About You

You can use any tool to create the selection in step 1; the Magic Selection Brush, the Lasso, and the Magic Wand are all good choices. Use whichever tool you're most comfortable with.

DELETING THE BACKGROUND

Backgrounds can be useful, but they can also be distracting. When you want to pull an object out of its environment by removing its background, turn to the Magic Extractor.



- 1** With the photo open, choose **Image, Magic Extractor** or press **Alt+Shift+Ctrl+V**.
- 2** With the **Foreground Brush** tool, click several times or scribble on the object you want to keep.
- 3** With the **Background Brush** tool, click several times or scribble on the rest of the image.

Continued



NOTE

Almost the Same

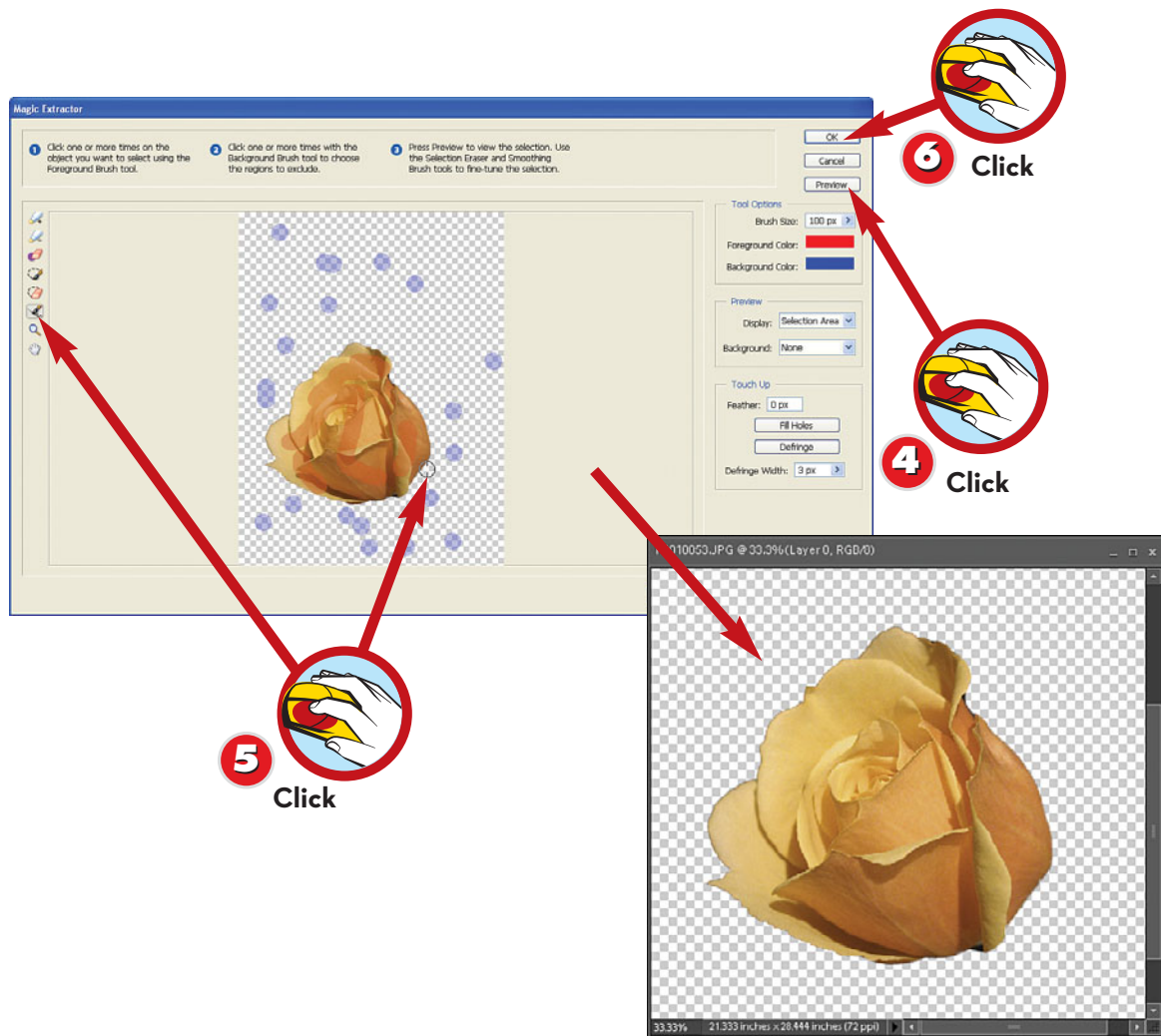
This technique works similarly to the Quick Selection tool. The dialog box's instructions say to click the areas you want to indicate as background and foreground, but scribbling works just as well.



TIP

Best Bets

You'll achieve the best results when you use an image that has a distinct foreground object that's very different in color or in lightness from the background.



- 4** Click **Preview** to see how the object looks with the background removed.
- 5** Use the **Selection Eraser** and the **Smoothing Brush** tools to delete leftover background areas or restore missing foreground areas.
- 6** Click **OK** to finalize the background removal.

End



NOTE

Go Back, Go Back

Take as long as you need to complete step 5; this is where the quick-and-dirty jobs are separated from the truly professional-looking ones.



TIP

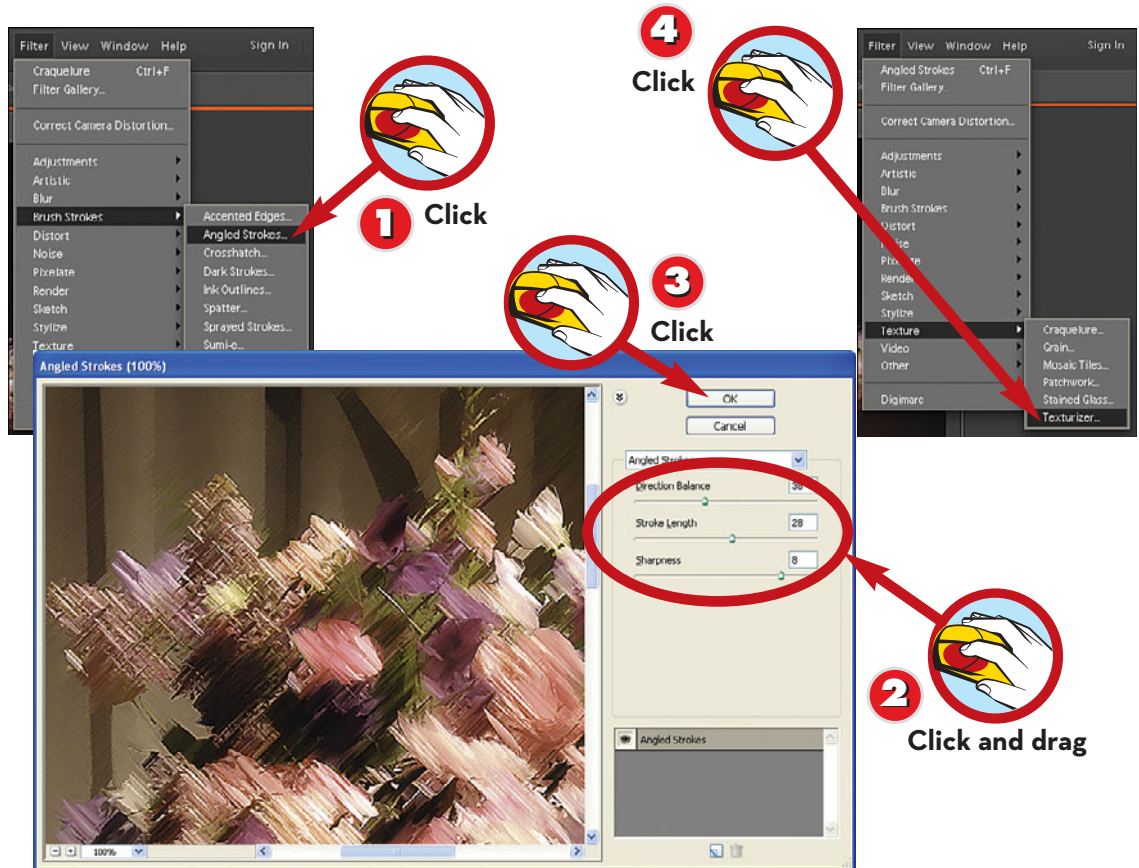
Background Notes

After you remove the photo's background, you can choose **Layer**, **Flatten Image** to replace the transparent pixels with the background color. Or, if you prefer, you can drag the image into another photo to give it a new background.

MAKING A PHOTO LOOK LIKE AN OIL PAINTING

No one's proposing you start cranking out fake Rembrandts, but there's something about brushstrokes on canvas that says high class. Try this with the family portrait and pretend you sat for a Dutch master.

Start



- 1** With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose **Filter, Brush Strokes, Angled Strokes**.
- 2** Adjust the **Direction Balance, Stroke Length, and Sharpness** sliders until you achieve a combination of settings you like.
- 3** When you see the desired effect in the Preview window, click **OK**.
- 4** Choose **Filter, Texture, Texturizer**.

Continued

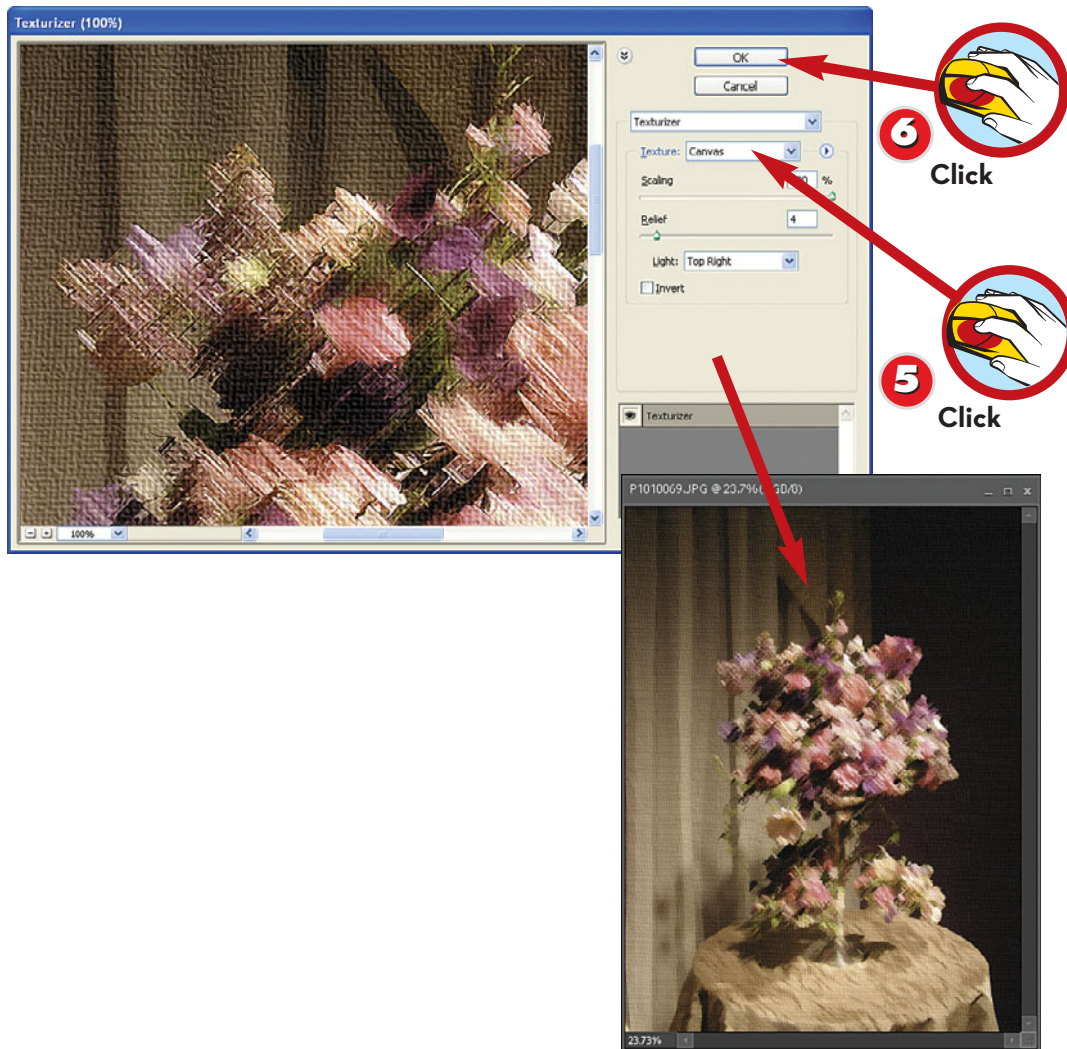


TIP

Tuning Your Strokes

The slider options in step 2 control the magnitude of the effect. You want to balance making the brushstrokes obvious enough to be seen, yet not so much as to obliterate fine detail in the picture.





5 From the Texture pop-up menu, choose **Canvas**.

6 Click **OK**.

End



TIP

How Rough Is Your Canvas?

As with brushstrokes, you can adjust Texturizer options to control roughness and lighting on the canvas: Scaling, Relief, and Light Direction. The Invert option reverses light and dark effects.



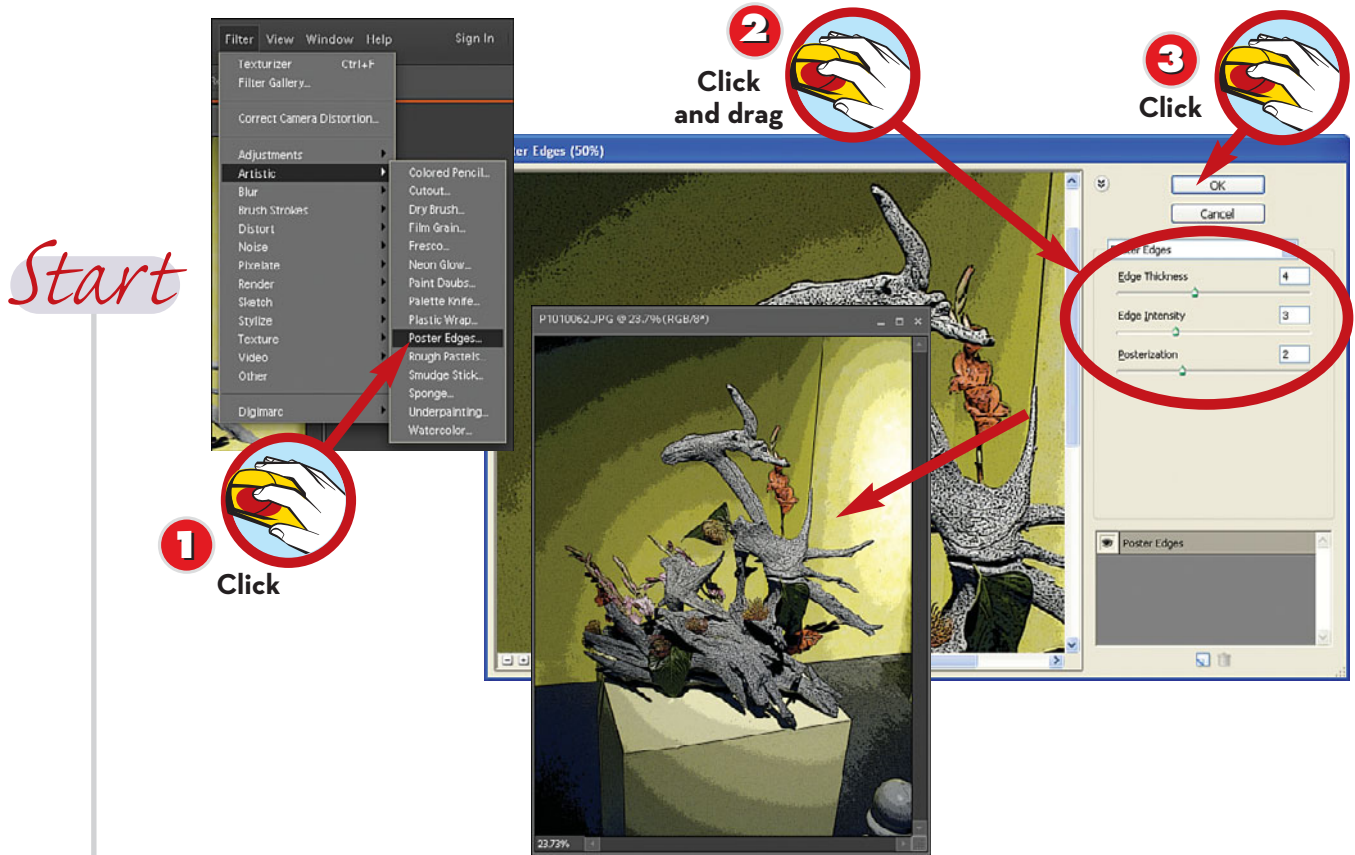
NOTE

No Rules

There are no rules for applying artistic effects. Be guided by your own taste. For example, instead of a Canvas texture, try Burlap or Sandstone. And remember, results vary depending on the source material.

POSTERIZING A PICTURE

Posterization became popular in the psychedelic movement of the 1960s as a way of making images seem more intense. Photoshop Elements includes a filter called Poster Edges to create this effect.



- 1** With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose **Filter, Artistic, Poster Edges**.
- 2** Adjust the sliders for **Edge Thickness, Edge Intensity,** and **Posterization** until you like the look of the image.
- 3** Click **OK**.

End



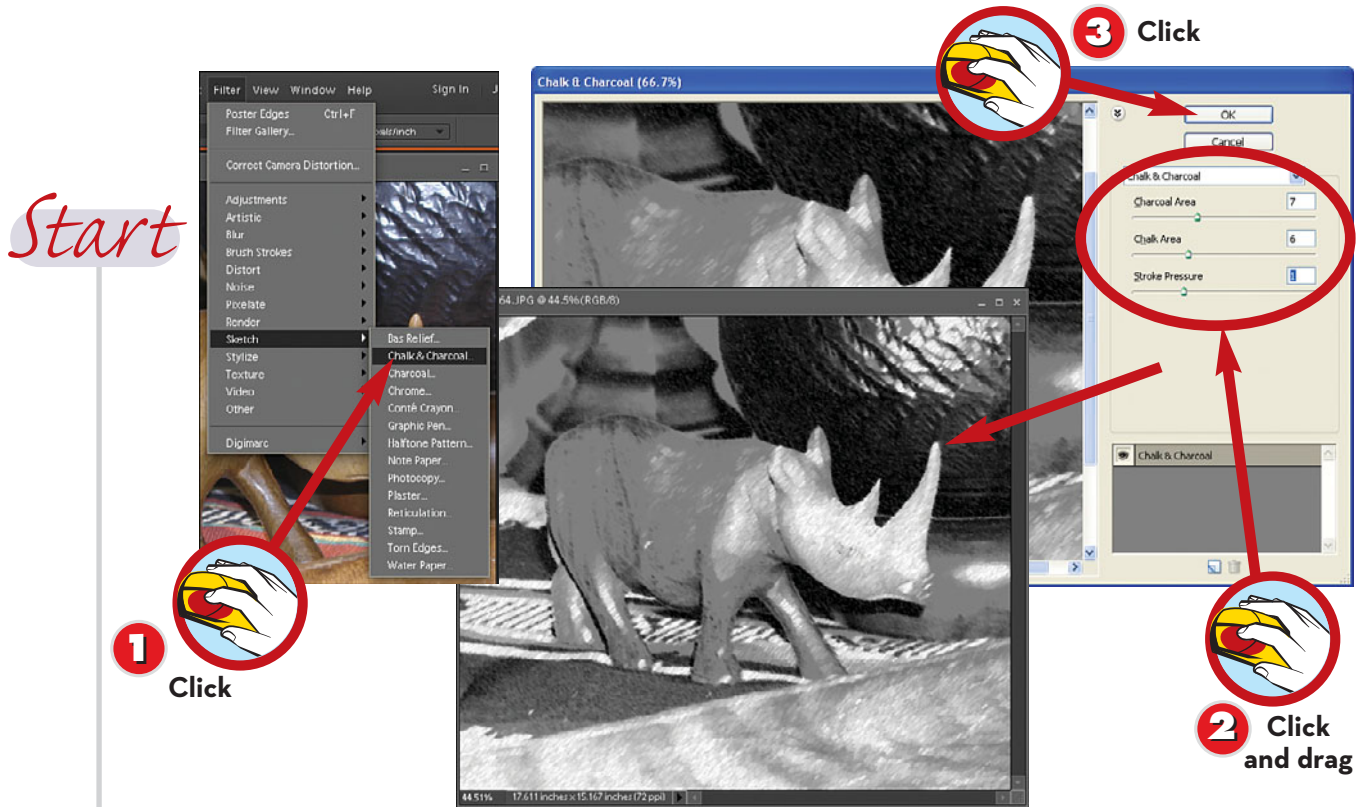
TIP

Ideas for Greeting Cards?

Applying the Poster Edges effect to a photo can make it look like a fine watercolor and ink drawing, or an elaborate illustration in a children's book.

MAKING A PHOTO LOOK LIKE A SKETCH

Whether your drawings look like stick figures or you're just in too big a hurry to sit down with your sketchpad, Photoshop Elements can make any photo look hand-drawn. For example, take a photo of the curbside view of your home, convert it to a sketch, and use it to illustrate personalized party invitations or stationery.



- 1** With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose **Filter, Sketch, Chalk & Charcoal**.
- 2** Adjust the sliders for **Charcoal Area, Chalk Area, and Stroke Pressure** until the image looks right to you.
- 3** Click **OK**.

End



TIP

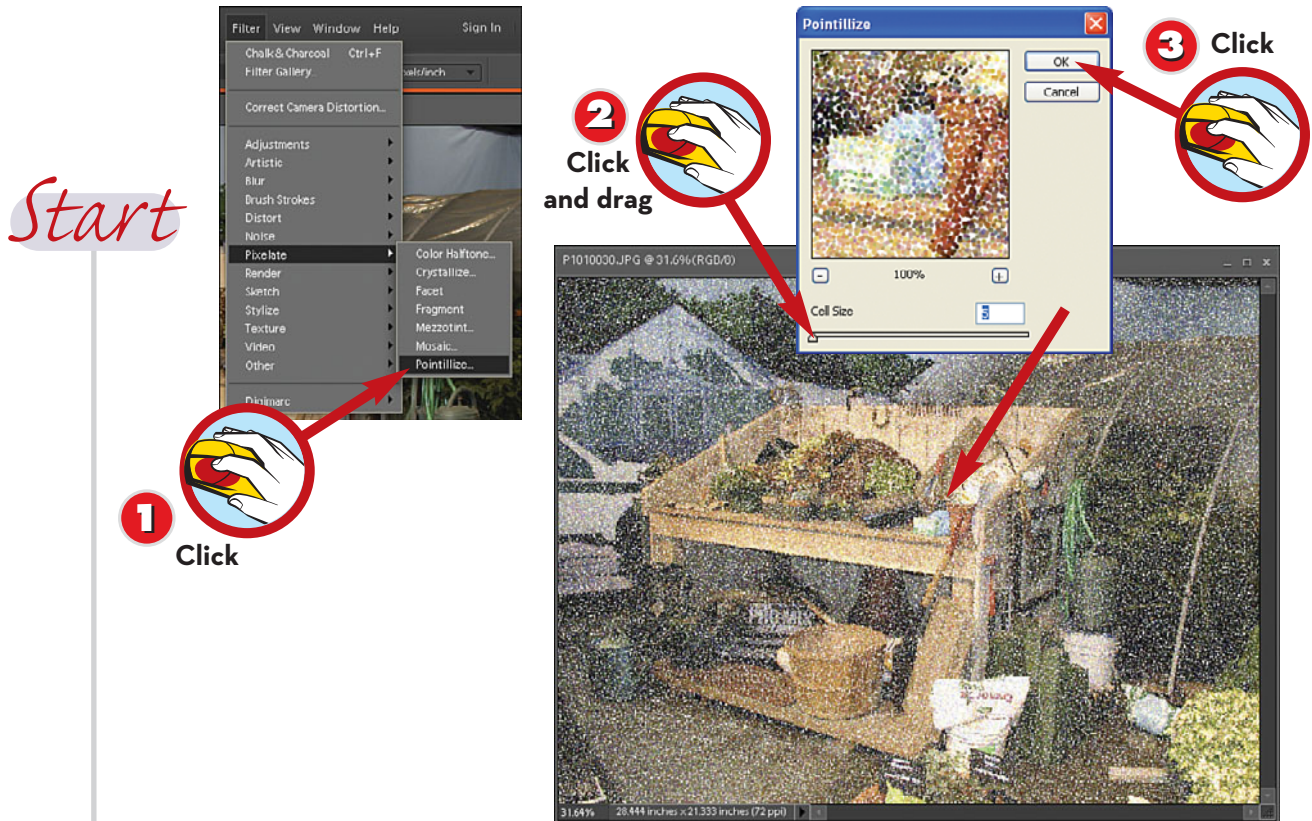
Make It Snappy

Although level correction isn't a required step, it's applied to this example to darken the lines so that the result reproduces better in print.



APPLYING THE POINTILLIZE FILTER

Pointillism is a technique pioneered by French Impressionist painter Georges Seurat more than a century ago. His paintings are composed of thousands of tiny dots of bright colors—and the overall effect is apparent only when viewing the work from a distance. In a sense, he invented pixels, which are the building blocks of today's computerized, digital images.



- 1** With the Editor in Full Edit mode and an image open, choose **Filter, Pixelate, Pointillize**.
- 2** Adjust the **Cell Size** slider to get the look you want.
- 3** Click **OK**.

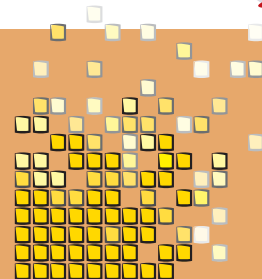
End



TIP

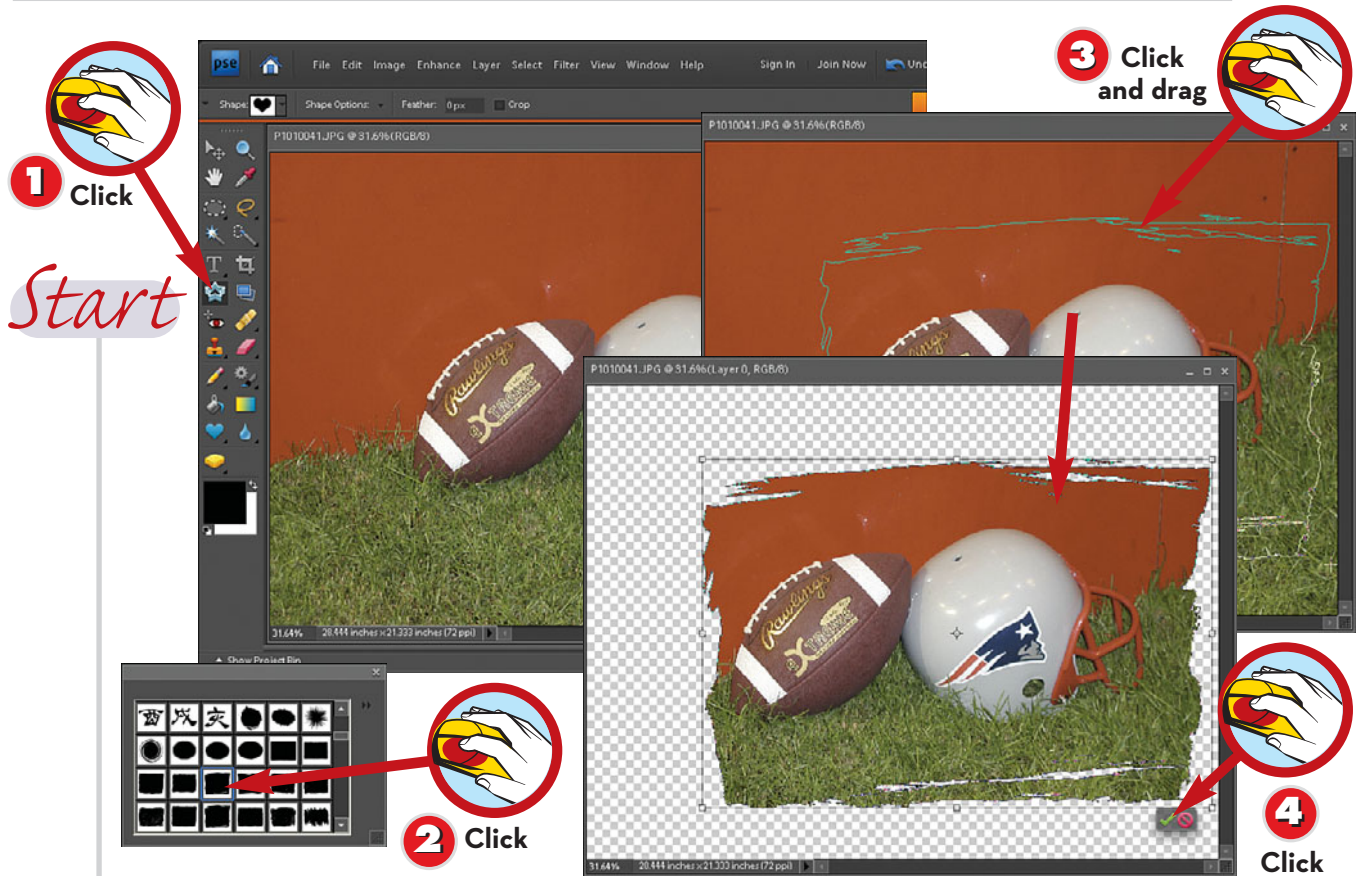
How Big Is a Cell?

Cell size in step 2 controls the size of the picture dots and the magnitude of the effect. You want it large enough to make the effect visible, small enough to preserve important picture details.



TRIMMING A PHOTO INTO A CUSTOM SHAPE

Who says photographs have to be square or rectangular? The sky's the limit as far as the Photoshop Elements Cookie Cutter tool is concerned, so you can make the shape of the photo part of the message it communicates. Try them all!



- 1** With an image open in the Editor's Full Edit mode, choose the **Cookie Cutter** tool from the toolbox.
- 2** Click to open the **Shape** pop-up menu, and then select a shape.
- 3** Click and drag in the document window to create the shape.
- 4** Click the **Commit** button to hide the parts of the image outside the shape.

End



TIP

Cutting and Cropping

After you've applied the Cookie Cutter tool to your image, you might want to use the Crop tool to get rid of the extra empty space surrounding the new shape.



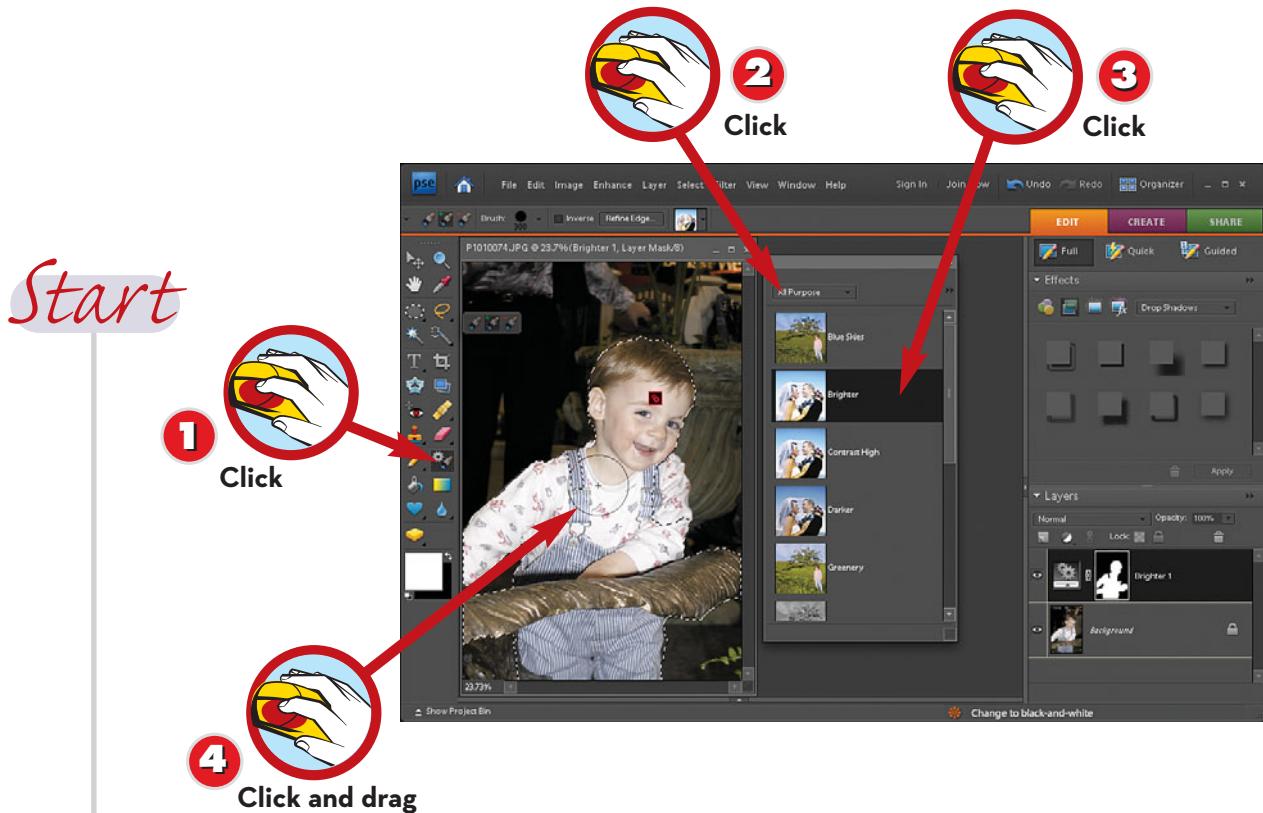
NOTE

There's Time to Get It Right

Until you press Enter, click the Commit button on the options bar, or switch to another tool or layer, you can move and resize the shape as much as you want to perfectly frame your picture.

APPLYING EFFECTS WITH THE SMART BRUSH

Using the Photoshop Elements new Smart Brush, you can apply special effects with a paintbrush, putting them right where you want them and nowhere else. It's a great tool for cleaning up snapshots with a minimum of fuss.



- 1** With an image open in the Editor's Full Edit mode, click the **Smart Brush** tool.
- 2** Choose an effects category from the pop-up menu at the top of the Smart Paint palette.
- 3** Click an effect to apply.
- 4** Paint over the area to which you want to apply the effect.

Continued



NOTE

Layers on Layers

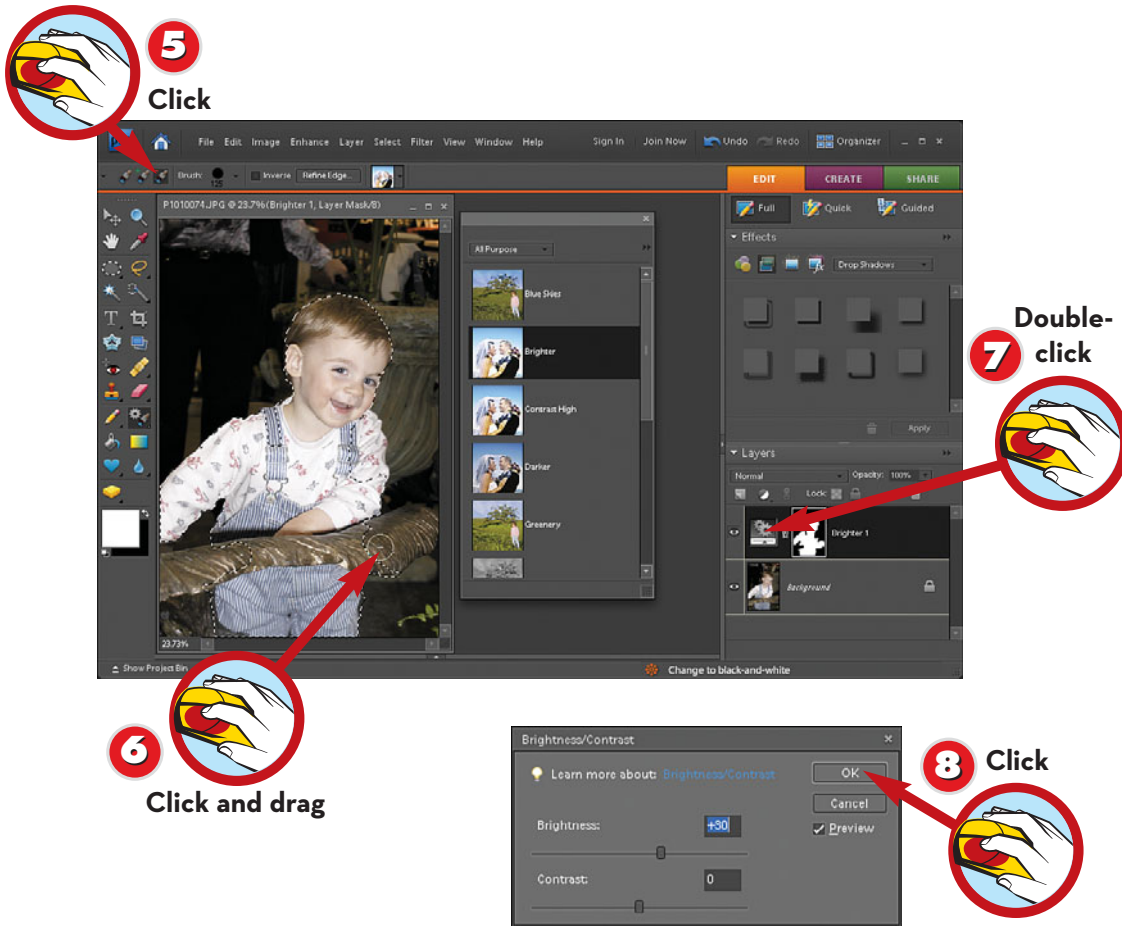
The Smart Brush adds adjustment layers to your image, combined with layer masks that determine where the adjustments are visible and where they're hidden. To learn more about adjustment layers, flip back to "Adding an Adjustment Layer" in Part 6.



NOTE

Do It Now or Do It Later

You can return to a Smart Brush adjustment at any time to modify its settings. When you click the corresponding layer in the Layers palette, Photoshop Elements restores the Smart Brush selection.



- 5** To remove an area from the selection, click the **Remove from Selection** brush.
- 6** Paint over the area that shouldn't have the effect.
- 7** To modify the settings, double-click the **Pin** in the image window or the layer's thumbnail in the Layers palette.
- 8** Make your changes and click **OK**.

End



NOTE

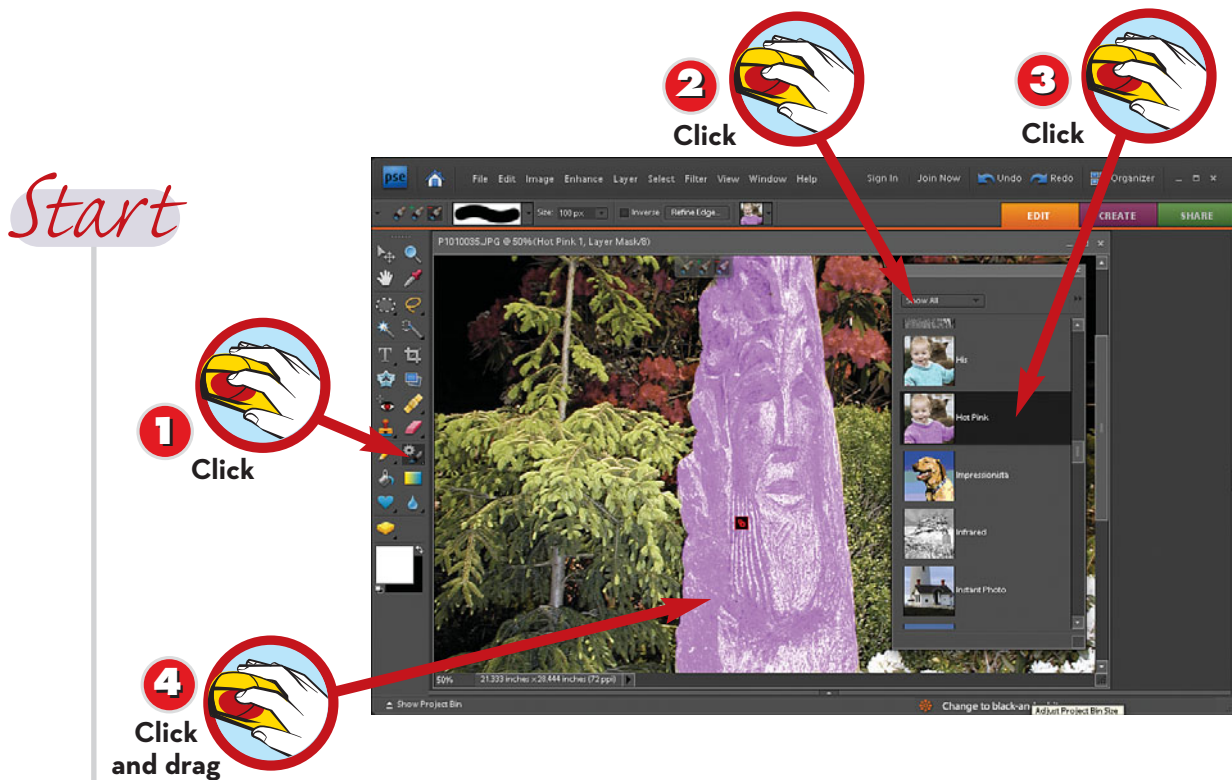
It Takes All Kinds

The effects you can apply with the Smart Brush fall into several categories; some are “fixes” for common image problems, and others are special effects to jazz up your images. Be sure to explore all your options.



TOUCHING UP WITH THE DETAIL SMART BRUSH

The Detail Smart Brush works the same way as the Smart Brush, only instead of helping you make your selection the way the Quick Selection tool does, it only goes where you put it, so you have more control. This tool is great for fixing up small areas where you need to make sure that the effect is applied exactly where you want it and nowhere else.



- 1 With an image open in the Editor's Full Edit mode, click the **Detail Smart Brush** tool.
- 2 Choose an effects category from the pop-up menu at the top of the Smart Paint palette.
- 3 Click an effect to apply.
- 4 Paint over the area to which you want to apply the effect.

Continued



NOTE

Just Like Big Sister

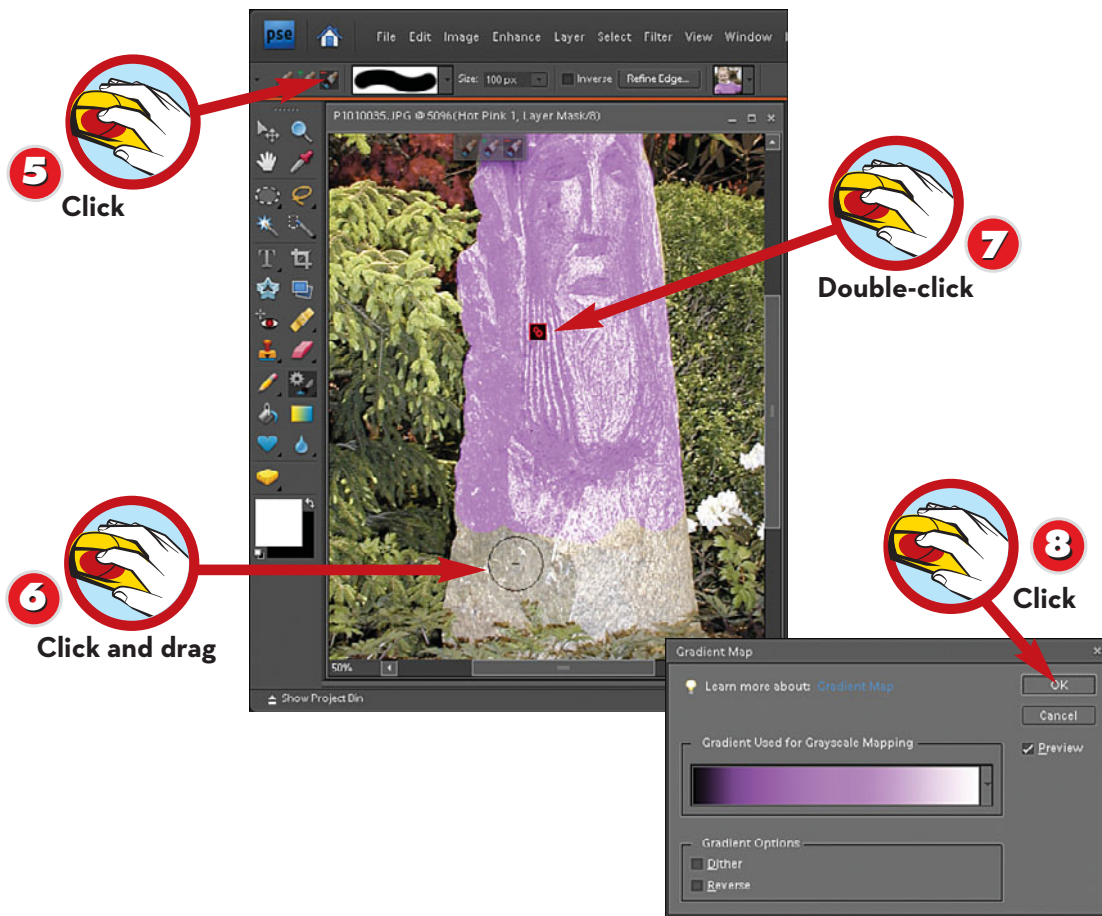
The Detail Smart Brush can apply all the same effects as the Smart Brush; be sure to explore all the options in the Smart Paint palette.



TIP

A Little of Both

The Detail Smart Brush works like a Painting tool; it has settings for brush size and shape in the options bar. But it also works like a Selection tool; you can click Refine Edge in the options bar to modify the selection's shape and size.



- 5** To remove an area from the selection, click the **Remove from Selection** brush.
- 6** Paint over the area that shouldn't have the effect.
- 7** To modify the settings, double-click the **Pin** in the image window.
- 8** Make your changes and click **OK**.

End



NOTE

Getting Back

To make changes to an existing Smart Paint effect, **Ctrl-click** or right-click its **Pin** to reactivate the selection. If a Pin is located inconveniently, you can click and drag to move it.



TIP

Same Tune, New Words

If you want to add more than one effect with either of the Smart Brushes, choose **Reset Tool** from the pop-up menu at the left end of the options bar, and then choose a new effect.

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