Photoshop Elements 5.0
WHAT'S NEW
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People ask me, "I have an older version of Elements or I own another, competitive product. Should I upgrade to or buy Elements 5.0?"

I can't answer that question for you. First of all, my Daddy told me, "*Never should on yourself or anyone else.*"

Only you can decide if you're willing to invest the money and the time to learn a new program, albeit built upon a version you're familiar with using.

1. NEW WAYS TO SHOW PHOTOS

Photo Creations includes such new things as photo layouts, album pages, DVD or CD labels and greeting cards. They can be single pages or up to 30 pages in one file. The new photo layout feature provides many formats but allows all to be customized. See the 5-series lessons at my Elements 5.0 Lessons webpage < http://darryd.com/PSE5 >

2. ADJUST COLOR CURVES

The Adjust Color Curves command improves color tones in a photo by adjusting highlights, midtones, and shadows in each color channel. For example, this command can fix photos with silhouetted images due to strong backlighting, or slightly washed-out objects that were too close to the camera's flash.

In the Adjust Color Curves dialog box, you compare and choose different tonal presets represented by image thumbnails. To fine-tune the adjustment, display Advanced Options section and adjust highlights, midtone brightness and contrast, and shadows.

3. CORRECT CAMERA DISTORTION

This dialog box enables you to fix common lens distortion problems, like darkened edges caused by lens faults or improper lens shading. For exam-

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ple, in a picture of the sky taken in low light, the corners of the image may be darker than the center. Changing the vignette amount and midtone settings fixes the distortion.

You can also use the perspective controls to rotate an image or fix image perspective caused by vertical or horizontal camera tilt. The Correct Camera Distortion filter's image grid allows you to make these adjustments easily and accurately

4. SHARPEN BLURRED EDGES

The Adjust Sharpness dialog box has sharpening controls not available with the Sharpen tool or with Auto Sharpen. You can set the sharpening algorithm or control the amount of sharpening that occurs in shadow and highlight areas.

The Unsharp Mask tool reduces Gaussian blurring, which often is not the cause of the blurring. This new tool, which is quite easy to use, is capable of reducing Gaussian Blur, Lens Blur and Motion Blur. A dialog box contains the image you are sharpening so that you can see the results of your changes in real time.

5. COLOR CURVES TOOL

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6. ENHANCED SUPPORT FOR RAW FILES

Raw files can be likened to a digital "negative," in that they contain the raw data of your picture before your camera makes the changes needed to produce a JPEG, TIFF, or other file format. The Raw format is most used by advanced photographers and sparingly if at all by the amateurs. No matter which you are, it is nice to have this capability if you have a very special subject that you want captured in all of its detail. You can process and edit the

raw files of most cameras within Elements 5.0. This is apparently a great time saver. The Adobe Camera Raw Converter allows you to make sophisticated corrections to your photos even before you open them, and you can further edit the file once it is opened.

7. CREATE DRAMATIC BLACK & WHITE PHOTOS

Photoshop Elements 5.0 makes it easier than ever to convert color photos to grayscale (black-and-white).

In Photoshop Elements 3, the easiest way was to select Image ➤ Mode ➤ Grayscale. While this produced an acceptable photo, it was not the best quality.

In Photoshop Elements 4, you could use Image ➤ Adjust Color and select "Adjust Hue/Saturation."

While keeping these options, in Elements 5, "Adjust Color" adds an optional "Remove Color" to the Enhance menu. This is a professional-level tool worthy of your investment.

View my lesson, "4-07 Convert to Grayscale" for the step-by-step, how-to procedures < http://darryd.com/PSE5 >.

8. FLIPBOOKS & PHOTO GALLERIES

Creations enables you to make flipbooks and three types of photo galleries that are web-oriented and animated. These can be burned to a CD or uploaded to your Website or to a free service provided by Adobe. The wizard does all things necessary to allow you to send the folder, which it creates, containing your project via FTP to your Web server.

A flipbook allows you to create a stop-motion video of your photos. Use this command to animate photos that were taken using the burst mode on your camera. Flipbooks are saved in WMV format and can be optimized for viewing on a computer, a TV, the Web, or via e-mail. You output the flipbook to your "My Videos" folder, and burn it to CD or VCD (a CD that performs like a DVD), or import it into Adobe Premiere Elements. You can also export the flipbook to a mobile phone.

9. ENHANCED CONTROL OF LAYERS

Layers are useful because they let you add components to the image and work on them one at a time, without permanently changing your original image. For each layer, you can adjust color and brightness, apply special effects, reposition layer content, specify opacity and blending values, and so on. You can also rearrange the stacking order, link layers to work on them simultaneously, and create Web animations with layers.

Layers are like stacked, transparent sheets of glass on which you can paint images. You can see through the transparent areas of a layer to the layers below. You can work on each layer independently, experimenting to create the effect you want. Each layer remains independent until you combine (link) or merge the layers.

The bottom-most layer in the Layers palette, the Background layer, is always locked, or protected, meaning that you cannot change its stacking order, blending mode, or opacity (unless you convert it to a regular layer).