workshop BEGINNING PHOTO EDITING taught by Lynn Weber

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CLASS #5: Fine tuning photos

- Removing Red Eye
- Correcting blemishes with the spot healing brush
- Fixing larger areas with the healing brush
- Using the clone tool-my personal favorite

We should now have photos that are cropped, brightened, color corrected and looking pretty good. But we're not done! What about some of the pesky details in the photos? There are quite a few little things we can fix to make our photos look even better! And these fixes are fairly easy to apply. Your family and friends will think you're a genius! So let's get started!

First, we're going to fix my grandson Eli's red eyes and clean up his messy face like this:

REMOVING RED EYE

Many programs you can use to upload your photos to your computer offer you the option of correcting red eye as the photos are uploaded. However, if your program doesn't offer this option,

Fine Tuning A Photo

We're going to fix Eli's red eye and clean up his messy face!

here's how you can make this easy correction in Photoshop products. This is one of the areas where Adobe has made some big changes. First we'll go through the way to fix red eye in the older versions of Photoshop and Photoshop Elements, which still isn't a difficult fix.

1. Open the photo I supplied with this link: Red Eye Photo. Once the photo is on your screen, "right-click" your mouse and select "save image as" to save to your hard drive. Remember where you stored it and open it with Photoshop. You probably won't want to duplicate it because you will want to save the corrected version as your only version. It's often easier to see the area you are working on when you are doing detail work if you make your photo larger on the screen. Do this by pressing CTRL and + at the same time. If you do this repeatedly, your photo will become larger and larger. If you want to make it smaller, press CTRL and -. When you want your photo to return to its original screen size, press CTRL and Zero.

2. On the toolbar along the left side of your workspace, you will see the Red Eye Tool. In some versions it's called the Red Eye Removal Tool. It looks like an eye. In some versions of PS and PSE, this tool is housed with the Spot Healing Brush so the Red Eye Tool may not be showing right now. If this is the case, you can hover your cursor over each of the tools until you find the Spot Healing Brush. It kind of looks like a bandaid. If you right click on this tool, you will get a flyout menu from which you can choose the Red Eye Tool. This Screen Shot shows the flyout menu in Photoshop, in case you are having trouble finding the Red Eye Tool.

3. Select the Red Eye Tool. The cursor when using the Red Eye Tool is a small cross hatch. If you place your crosshatched cursor directly on the center of the red eye and click, the eye will be recolored. Do the same for the other eye. Save
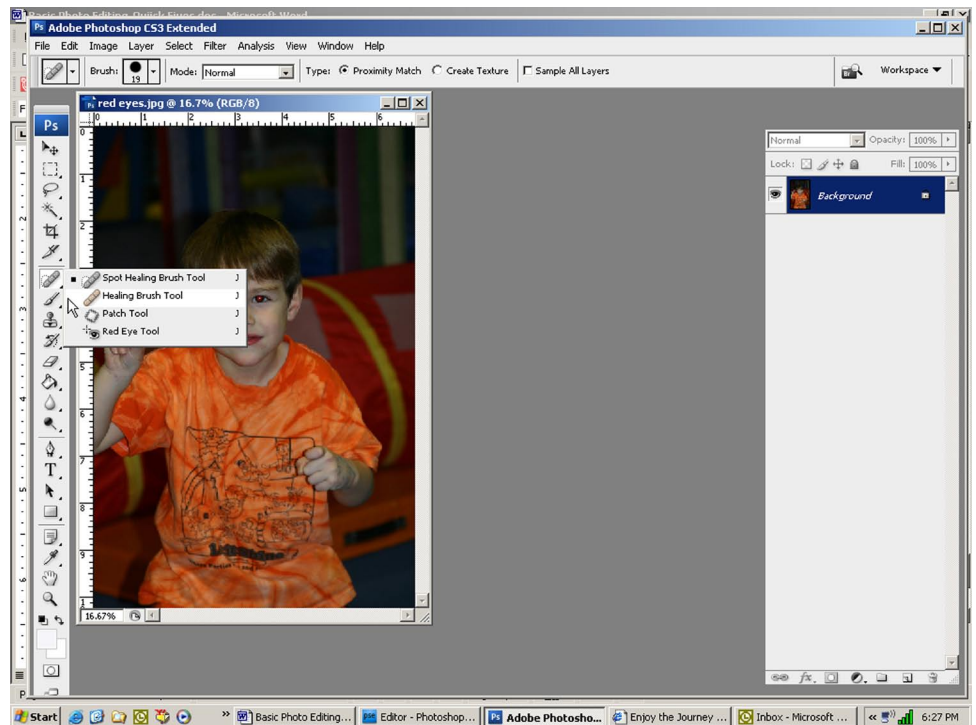
your changes (by clicking CTRL+S) unless you are a PSE6 or 7 user. I'm going to show PSE6 and 7 users another way to remove red eyes, so PSE6 and 7 users should just Click Undo (or CTRL+Z) to get your red eyes back again.

4. Photoshop Elements 6 and 7 users have it even easier. All you have to do is go to the top menubar, and select >Enhance >Auto Red Eye Fix, and your red eyes are corrected! Just like that! Save your changes by clicking CTRL+S.

CORRECTING BLEMISHES WITH THE SPOT HEALING TOOL

Let's play with the same photo we had up for the red eye correction.

1. Duplicate the photo. Select the Spot Healing brush from the toolbar on the left side of your workspace. It looks like a bandaid and is next to the Red Eye Tool in PSE7 and housed with the Red Eye Tool in most other versions.

2. The Spot Healing Tool is a brush so when you choose the tool, you will get a brush toolbar on the top of your workspace.

3. The first part of the brush toolbar shows a brushstroke. If you click on the arrow, you will get a menu of all sorts of different brushes. There are tons of fun ones to play with, but for right now we will leave the brush that is already set, one with a moderately soft edge.

4. Again, you will want to press CTRL and + a time or two to zoom in on the boy's face and neck.

5. Position your cursor over the little freckle spot to the right of his eye. Your cursor will be a little circle. The circle should be just slightly larger than the spot you are trying to remove.
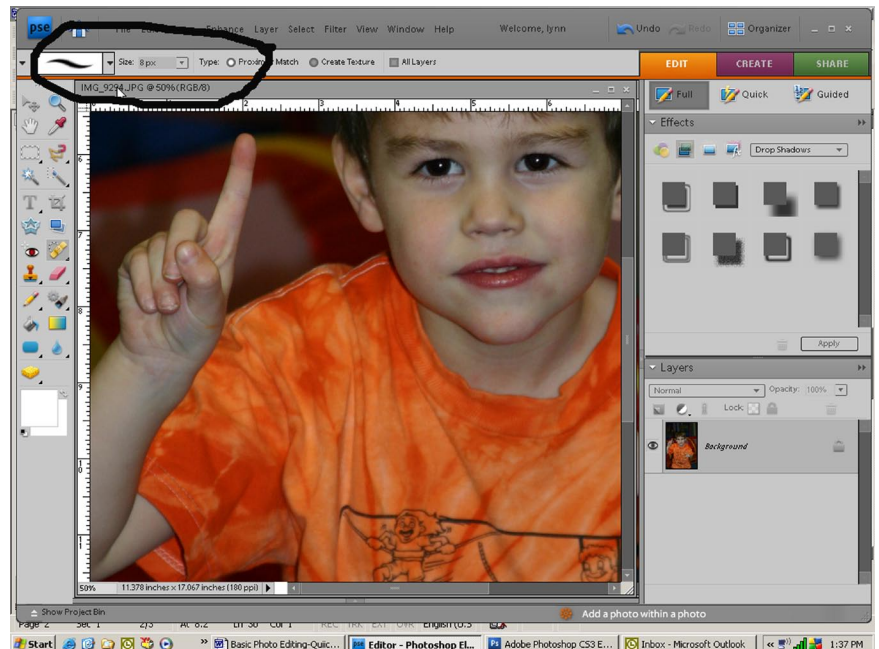
To change cursor size: look at the brush toolbar again at the top of the workspace. The second box on the toolbar selects the size of the brush tip. If your cursor circle is too small for the freckle, make it slightly larger by either typing a number in the box or clicking on the arrow and moving the slider slightly to the right. If its too big, move the slider to the left and make it smaller. You don't want the brush to be too much bigger than the spot to be removed. It will remove the spot by selecting from the area around it and duplicating that color over the spot. If you make the cursor area too big, it may have trouble selecting an appropriate color.

6. The third part of the brush toolbar should have "Proximity Match" selected so that the brush will choose from the area around the spot.

7. When you have the toolbar all set the way you want it, position the circular Spot Healing Cursor over the spot and click. The spot should have disappeared! He also has a little spot on his neck so try the Spot Healing Brush again and make that one disappear too! You can also scoot over and fix the little boo-boo on his wrist.

FIXING LARGER AREAS WITH THE HEALING BRUSH

While the Spot Healing Brush works well on small areas, you will get better results on larger areas with the Healing Brush. The major difference between the two is: while the Spot Healing Brush selects color from the area immediately surrounding the spot, the Healing Brush allows you to select the area to be sampled for healing from anywhere on your photo. Let's give it a try.

1. This boy has kind of a messy mouth and chin (a typical little boy!) So we're going to clean him up a little. Let's find the Healing Brush from the toolbar to the left of your workspace. It will be housed with the Spot Healing Brush that you just used. Right click on the Spot Healing Brush and the flyout menu with the Healing Brush will appear. Select it.

2. This time when you click the little arrow next to the brush in your brush toolbar, you will see that you have many brush choices. (See Screen Shot below.) First we'll decide on a diameter to use. I have zoomed in on my photo a bit, so on the bottom left, under my photo, it says 66.67%. For this photo being viewed at this size, I will choose a brush of about 60 pixels. I chose this size by typing 60 in the box above the diameter slider. You can also move the slider to make this selection. I chose 60 pixels because this makes my cursor a good size to choose a spot of clean skin from his cheek.
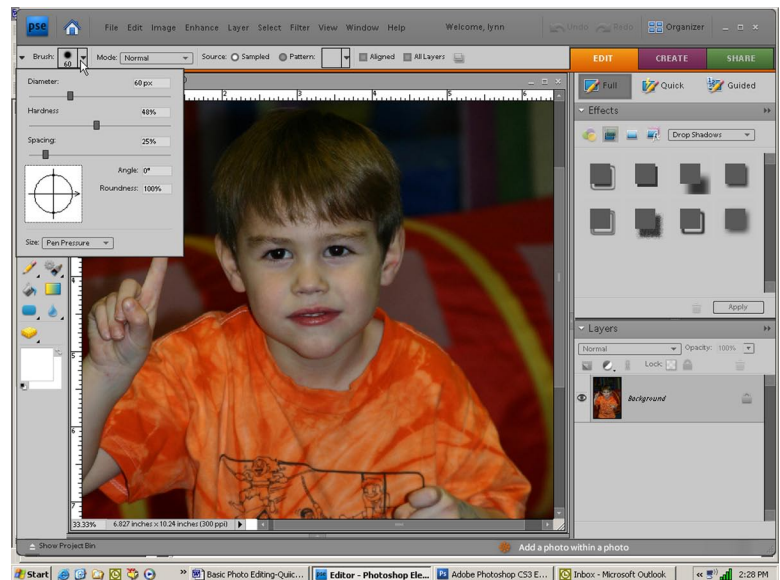
3. Because we want the area we select our color from to blend well into the area we are going to repair, we want to choose a brush with a rather soft edge. So we will move the Hardness slider to about the middle—around 50%. We won't need to change any of the other settings in this box at this time, so just leave them at the default.

4. Position your cursor over a clean spot on the boy's cheek and press ALT and Click

at the same time. This will select this area so it can be applied over another area of the photo.

5. Now move your cursor over a part of his face that is messy and click. AS you release the mouse, you will see the sampled area being blended into the repaired area. Your brush is "loaded" with the clean selection, so you should be able to click on several more messy areas and clean up his face. If at any time you don't like the way the repaired spot looks, just press CTRL+Z to undo the repair. If you are repairing many spots, you may need to take other samples from other parts of the photo to properly repair all the spots. For example, if he had a messy spot on his shirt, we wouldn't use the sample from his cheek to repair it, we would take a new sample from his shirt.

6. This is a great tool to use on wrinkles and runny noses! Sometimes you will need to make your brush size very small so that you can sample and repair small areas at a time.

USING THE CLONE TOOL

With the Clone Tool, we can remove distracting elements like the picture on this teacher's shirt from a photo.


The Clone Stamp is like the Healing Brush in that you add material from a source point that you select. The main difference is that the Clone Stamp doesn't blend in when the new selection is applied to the area to be repaired. It just covers up the underlying area completely. So you will want to use the Clone Stamp when you don't want to leave any traces of the original area.

1. Open the photo I supplied at this link: Cloning. Once the photo is on your screen, "right-click" your mouse and select "save image as" to save to your hard drive. Remember where you stored it and open it with Photoshop. We're going to remove those wires going across the photo. I think they detract from the photo.

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2. Select the Clone Stamp from the toolbar on the left side of your workspace. It looks like a little rubber stamp. In PSE7, it is right below the Red Eye Tool. There is a flyout menu with this tool, as the Pattern Stamp is also housed here. Make sure you have selected the Clone Stamp.

3. Once again, you will see the Brush Toolbar at the top of your workspace. We want the selected area we choose to blend in with the area we use it on, so we will again choose a soft brush. Click on the dropdown arrow next to the brush and choose the one that looks kind of fuzzy and marked with number 100. That means it's kind of soft and 100 pixels in size. For this repair, we will leave the rest of the toolbar as is. Close the brush selection menu.
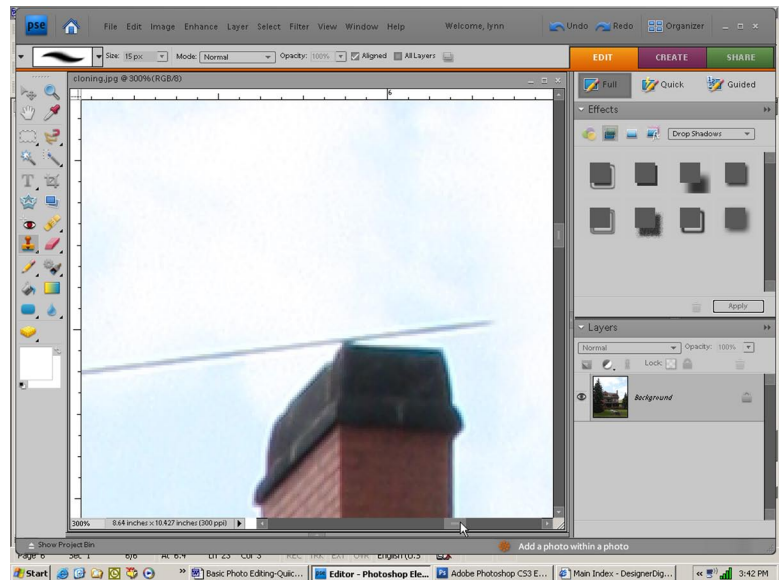
4. Press CTRL and + several times to zoom in on the electric wires. We'll start all the way over on the right side of the photo where there is a cloud. Press ALT and click on an area of the cloud, selecting a clear area. Position your cursor all the way over on the right side of the photo and, holding down the mouse button, you can slide your selection along the wire for about an inch. This will, in effect, paint over the wire with the white you selected from the clouds. Take another selection and "paint" again. If you go too far with your "painting" you may see other parts of the photo being applied where you don't want them. Just press CTRL+Z to undo, take another selection, and try again. Keep going until the wire across the cloud is gone and you are near the chimney.

5. Cloning around the chimney will be a little more tedious than going across the clouds. You'll want to zoom in on this area a little more by pressing CTRL and + a few more times. As the photo gets larger, you may lose the area of the photo you want to work on. There are sliders along the right side and bottom of the photo that you can move. These will move the photo around until you locate the area that is the top of the chimney

6. Because you have zoomed in on your photo, you will see that your brush tip or cursor has become huge! Go up to the Brush toolbar and reduce the size of your brush. I am zoomed in to 300% (it tells me this in the lower left under my photo) and I'm going to use a brush that is only 15 pixels.

7. Sample frequently from slightly above the wire and "paint" small areas of the wire with your selection. You can even just tap the mouse button and apply the color in dots across the wire. As you get farther away from the chimney, you can press CTRL and minus and zoom back out and choose a larger brush again sampling and applying until you get to the peak of the roof.

8. When you get to the peak of the roof, you will again want to zoom in and reduce the size of your brush. You will want to select frequently and paint the color on in small areas or dots. The wire doesn't really show on the black trim areas of the house so you won't need to clone there. When you get across the peak, there is another small area of sky to clone before the tree.

9. Now it's time to clone across the tree. The tree is a variegated area so you won't have to be very precise with your cloning. Remember, when this photo is viewed at its original size these areas won't stand out as much as when you are zoomed in on them. Give it your best try sampling and applying across the tree. Then press CTRL and zero to return the photo to its original size and see how it looks. Aren't you proud of your work?

10. Cloning can be used to do away with all kinds of objectionable things in your photos from stains on shirts to electric cords stretched across the scene to people you'd rather not have in the photo! It takes some patience and practice, but cloning is one of my favorite Photoshop tools because of the big difference it makes in my photos.

HOMEWORK

The photo fixes we have discussed in this lesson are among the most interesting to use and they can make a huge difference in your finished photo. Have fun playing with them!

If you have a photo which you have fine tuned by removing red eye, spot healing or cloning, we would love to see your before and after! Prepare your photos according to the homework preparation steps in Class #1, and post them in the gallery. We'll be watching for them!

getting ready for class #6

In our last lesson, we'll learn about the last step in the editing process, Sharpening. We will also become familiar with all the Auto Fixes available in your software, especially Photoshop Elements 6 and 7.