

‘How to’ Cheat Sheet for Layer Usage in Photoshop CC and Elements 14

By Georgianne Giese

I Want to:	How:
Change the brush size	Elements: Select brush. Adjust the size and opacity on the Brush menu; PS CC: Adjust size on Brush thumbnail; Both: Click on image and use ‘]’ to increase the size, ‘[’ to decrease the size.
Change the brush head direction	Elements: Click on Brush Settings on Brush menu, and rotate the circle with the arrow. If the Brush menu (bottom of screen) is not visible, click Tool Options at the bottom of screen. PS CC: Click on the Brush thumbnail, 2 nd from left on top left. Rotate the arrow.
Change how the brush acts	Elements: On the Brush menu (Tool Options displays this), click on Brush Settings and Tablet Settings. Play with sliders and options. PS CC: Click on 3 rd thumbnail from top left. It looks like a crown. The Brush Palette opens. Play with the sliders.
Select a color	On the Color icon at bottom of Tool Palette, click on the top, foreground color. Use sliders to select a color family, then click on the square color variants image, on the desired color.
Open the Layers Palette	On top menu: Window > Layers
Set the amount of History keeping	On top menu: Edit > Preferences > Performance > History & Cache
Open the History list	On top menu: Window > History
Go back a few steps in my already completed work	Both: Click on the previous step you want to go back to, on the History list; Elements: Repeat click on undo (or redo), at bottom of screen; or only in PS CC: Ctrl + Alt + Z until you get to the step you want
Rename a layer	Click on the current layer name and type a new name, and then hit return key
Copy the currently selected layer	Ctrl J
Add a new, blank layer	On Layer Palette, click icon that looks like a piece of paper with the corner turned back; the new layer is on top of the previously selected layer. Icon is on top of Layer Palette in Elements , but at the bottom of Layer Palette in PS CC .

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<p>Make a non-destructive adjustment to a layer</p>	<p>On Layer Palate, click icon that looks like a black/white circle with a tail. A drop down menu appears. Select the type of adjustment you want. Move the sliders on the adjustment window that pops up, until the desired effect appears on the spot that you want to change.</p>
<p>Hide an adjustment layer effect everywhere except on the area I want changed</p>	<p>Change the color of the adjustment layer mask to black (Ctrl I (‘eye’); See below.) Select the mask by a click on it. Paint with white on the image in the area you want changed. Adjust the opacity of the paintbrush for shading.</p>
<p>Toggle the color of the adjustment layer mask</p>	<p>Ctrl I (‘eye’) toggles the mask color between black and white. Black hides the mask’s layer. White reveals the mask’s layer.</p>
<p>Change the foreground/ background paint color between black and white NOTE: The foreground is always the current paint color. The foreground/background colors are displayed at the bottom of the Tools menu (Window > Tools)</p>	<p>Click the letter ‘D’ to select the default pure black/pure white. To toggle between foreground and background, click the letter ‘X’</p>
<p>Change the effect of a layer on a layer beneath it with a change in opacity of the top layer</p>	<p>Click on the desired layer to change. Click on the down arrow box next to ‘Opacity’ at the top right of the Layer Palate. Move the slider to the desired opacity.</p>
<p>Change the effect of a layer on a layer beneath it with a change in blending mode between the 2 layers only</p>	<p>Click on the top layer of the two layers. Select the first blending mode you desire. Use the down arrow on your keyboard to page through the different blending effects until you prefer one.</p>
<p>Merge layers non-destructively</p>	<p>Elements: Ctrl + Alt + Shift + click down arrow on top right Layer Palate menu icon and scroll down to Merge Visible while still holding down Ctrl + Alt + Shift. PS CC: Alt + + click down arrow on top right Layer Palate menu icon and scroll down to Merge Visible while still holding down the Alt key. (Ctrl + Alt + Shift + E is total shortcut)</p>
<p>Hide parts of an image layer (not an ‘adjustment layer’)</p>	<p>Add a layer mask: Select the desired layer. Select the Layer’s Menu icon that looks like a rectangular black box with a white circle in the center. Make it a white mask (Ctrl I(‘eye’) until white is on top of Color Palate). Select pure black as the foreground color on the Color Palate (‘D’ + ‘X’ until black is on top.) Select a paint brush and paint on the part of the image you wish to hide. Whatever is visible on under layers will show through.</p>

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<p>Add light to selective parts of the image</p>	<p>Select the top visible layer. Add a Brightness/Contrast (Both) or an Exposure (PS CC only) adjustment layer (see above). Toggle the adjustment layer mask to black. Paint with white on the mask where you want highlights to appear.</p>
<p>Paint a straight line on my layer</p>	<p>With paint brush tool selected, click on the beginning of the line on the image. Hold down the Shift key and click on the end of the line on the image. A straight line will appear between the two clicks.</p>
<p>Remove part of an image destructively</p>	<p>Select the part to be removed and a small section of the surrounding image. Select Edit > Fill > Content Aware (100% opacity, Normal blending) (PS CC). If this doesn't work in Elements, try the Healing Brush, with a hard 100% opacity brush size, large enough to conceal the object.</p>
<p>Make artistic adjustments with NIK or Topaz</p>	<p>Select a merged top layer, then select Filter > [NIK Topaz] > [desired tool, eg., Color Efex Pro]. Tool opens. Select a preset. Keep it at one preset. Adjust sliders. Save. NIK creates a new layer. Topaz saves destructively on the same layer, so duplicate your desired layer BEFORE opening Topaz. Repeat for each preset you wish to apply.</p>