ADOBE

Photoshop

A Complete
COURSE
AND
COMPENDIUM
of Features

LESSONS
Master best practices
through well-tested exercises

REFERENCE
Easily find and explore
key features and concepts

rocky**nook**

STEVE LASKEVITCH

Visit the following websites to learn more about this book:

1 Preliminary Tuning

In this brief chapter, we configure a few preferences and adjust the Photoshop workspace to make this daunting application more our own. In the process, we learn a little vocabulary too.

Then we'll be in position to really play this instrument.

Preferences

For our first exercise, these few suggestions on how to configure Photoshop will do. Many more suggestions will be made throughout this course.

➡ To make our user experience as pleasant as possible, let's adjust our Preferences. It's quick and easy to get to this page of the Preferences: On a Mac, use the Photoshop menu; on Windows go to the Edit menu. In either case, choose Preferences. You may also use the somewhat unintuitive shortcut ⌘–K/Ctrl–K.

Interface

This book makes extensive use of screenshots (pictures of my screen while using Photoshop). To make these as legible as possible, I'm going to make Photoshop's user interface a little less dark and murky. So that we both have similar experiences, you may wish to do the same.

➡ Click Interface on the left side of the Preferences dialog box. Choose the lightest Color Theme.

➡ In the Presentation section, you may change the font size of user interface ("UI") elements. I use Large, which is not very large at all. The entire user interface can be scaled to match. This is possibly useful on high-resolution displays.
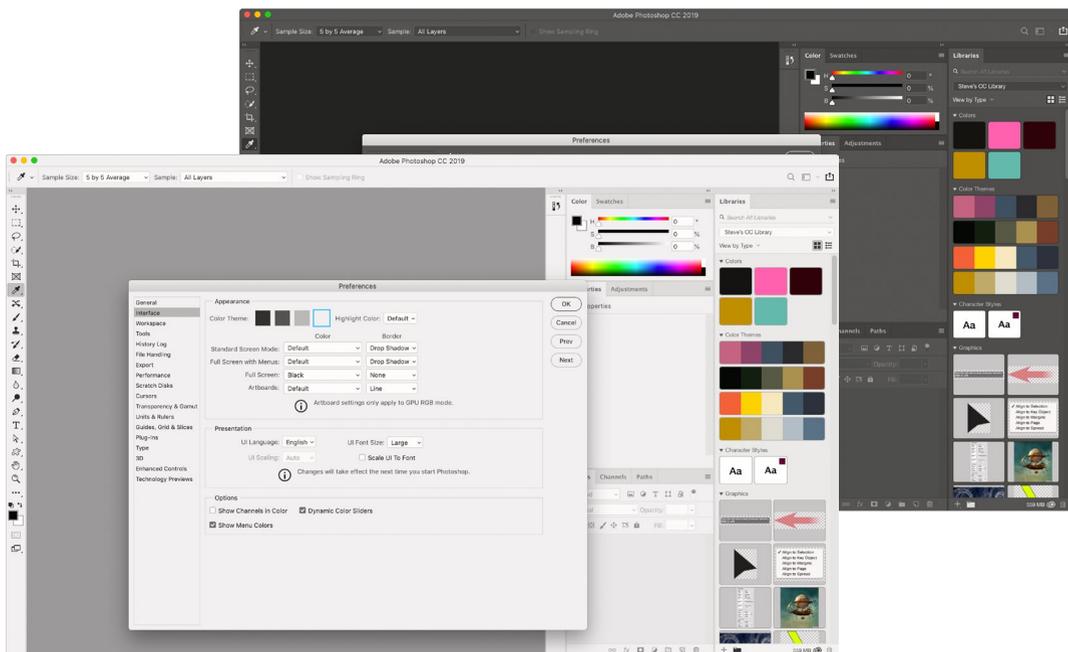

Dark and gloomy to light and airy

The Course

File Handling

There are several annoyances that I would like to prevent for both of us. Sometimes, when saving files of certain formats, Photoshop will interrupt the process with alerts and dialog boxes that are needless at best, and are often confusing to new users.

Also, crashes happen. So we've been taught to save often, which is good advice, including in Photoshop. Luckily, Photoshop saves recovery data in case we forget to save our files as frequently as we aspire to.

What follows are my suggestions (with explanations) for settings that will save time and minimize those annoying messages.
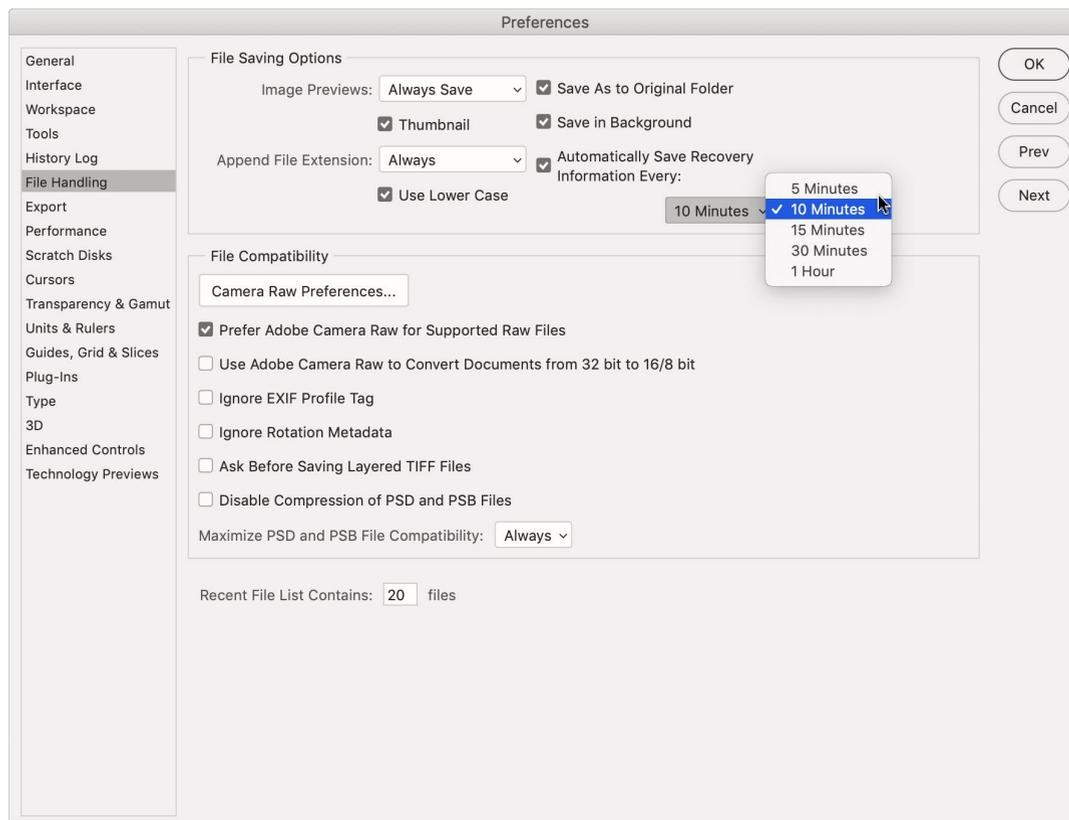
Save As to Original Folder

For those occasional instances when I save a copy of a file, I usually want it to be in the same folder as the original. Of course, it's easy to choose a different location. This preference checkbox makes the original file's folder the first suggestion.

➡ Ensure that the checkbox for this option is checked.

Automatically Save Recovery Information Every…

Although Photoshop isn't saving your actual file, this is still useful in the event of a crash.

Layers & Smart Objects

Adjustments & Color

Brushes & Painting

Selections & Masks

Filters & Transforms

Retouching & Repair

Editing Raw Files

Extending Photoshop

The Course

When you next restart the application, Photoshop will show you a likeness of the document you were working on. If this option is set to 10 Minutes, that is the maximum amount of work you will have lost. You should know that large, complex documents take longer to save, and so does their recovery information. During that time, Photoshop runs more slowly.

➡ Choose a frequency that reflects your level of caution.

Ask Before Saving Layered TIFF Files and Maximize PSD and PSB File Compatibility

Layers are the most important feature in Photoshop and there are several file formats that use them. When you save a document that contains layers and choose one of these formats, you are presented with odd warnings.

Saving to a TIFF format will prompt an obvious warning that adding layers increases file size. You can disable that warning here. Photoshop's native format, Photoshop Document (PSD), and its close cousin for documents larger than 2 gigabytes, Large Document format (PSB), also prompt you when first saving a document with layers. To better ensure that these files can be opened with other versions of the program, and to generate a usable preview inside other applications, we need to maximize the file's compatibility.

➡ Disable the option to Ask Before Saving Layered TIFF Files, and choose Always for the option to Maximize PSD and PSB File Compatibility.

Amusing fact: the letters of the extension for Photoshop's Large Document format, PSB, stand for "**P**hoto**s**hop **B**ig!"

Performance

There is likely nothing you need to change in these preferences. But I'd like you to be aware of something. Many applications, Photoshop included, rely increasingly on a computer's graphics processor (its GPU) to do its work. If the one installed on your computer is supported, it will be listed here and the Use Graphics Processor box will be checked.

Technology Previews

This preference is where you can enable experimental features that vary with version. Often, these features ship with the application eventually. In the version that's current as I write this book, the previewed feature called Preserve Details 2.0 Upscale is available. It's an artificial intelligence–assisted way to "upsample" an image. That is, when pixels are added, this method keeps important details (like hair) sharp without damaging softer transitions (like skin). Check on this part of the preferences after updating to see what's new.

Note: I'll let you know what other preferences may need to be adjusted as we go forward.

➡ Click OK so we can adjust the interface a bit more.

Configuring the Workspace

When you first install Photoshop, some features that you'll need frequently are out of sight, and some that you'll need only infrequently are taking up lots of space. Let's fix this!
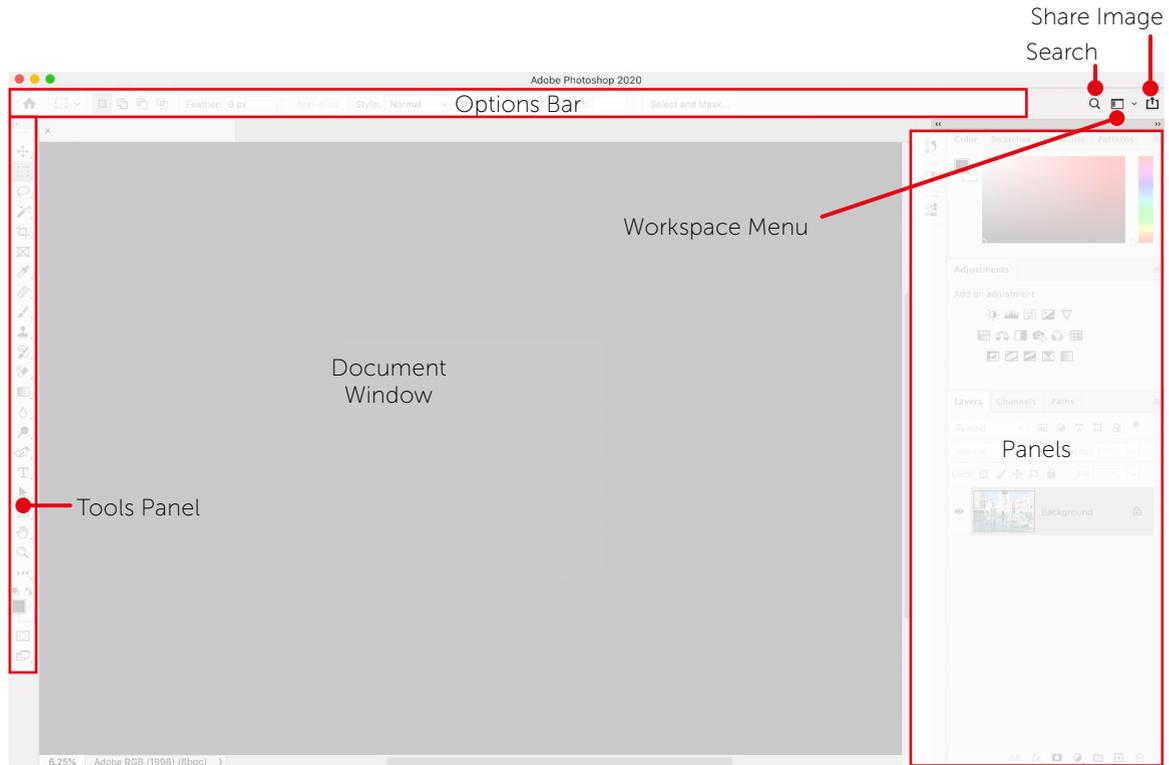

In the figure above, you can see Photoshop's basic geography. If you're using Microsoft Windows, you'll notice that it's extremely similar to the view on the Mac from which this image was made. The area where we work is called the document window. It is surrounded by panels. On the left is the Tools panel. You will soon learn that we switch tools very frequently. On the right are other panels—initially, some are expanded and at least one is collapsed to nothing more than an icon. Later you will find the right side populated by a great number of panels. Just above the document window is the Options Bar. Luckily, here you can find many options that each tool offers.

At the top of the stack of panels is small button with << or >> in it. When clicked, it collapses or expands the panels below it. Clicking it again reverses the process.

You can adjust each panel's height by grabbing the "bar" separating them—watch for the two-headed arrow, then press and drag to resize the panels above and below the bar.

Incidentally, while your attention is on the upper-right part of Photoshop's interface, note the several icons above the panels. The magnifier opens a search window that you use to search the help system, stock images, Photoshop's features, and your own images (if you use Lightroom). The share button allows you to share images via various apps on your computer.

The Course

Example: The Painting workspace changes both the tools and panels.
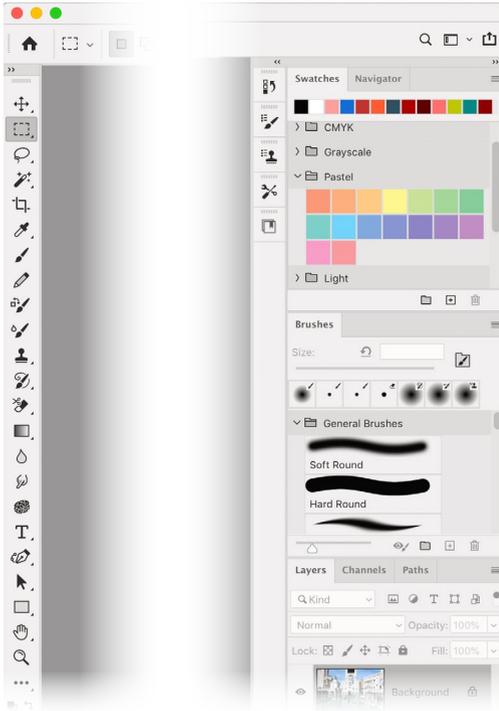
Most useful to us at the moment is the button between those two: the Workspace menu. It lists various kinds of task that require different panels and tools. Choosing a task like Painting will change both the panels on the right to allow elaborate brush control and the Tools panel to include all Photoshop tools that use a painting metaphor. Returning to Essentials workspace shows us where we started. We will create our own workspace.

Docking and Arranging Panels

We'll alter the Essentials workspace slightly to give us more room to move and to reveal the panels we need most often.

The panels we see on the right are currently "docked." That is, they form columns and can be docked next to other docks. Any panel can be docked by dragging it by its name to where you'd like to dock it. A blue highlight will reveal where it'll go.

➡ Choose Essentials from the Workspace menu.

➡ Move the Libraries panel and the Properties panel to the collapsed dock just to the left of the Color panel. (See the figure below.)
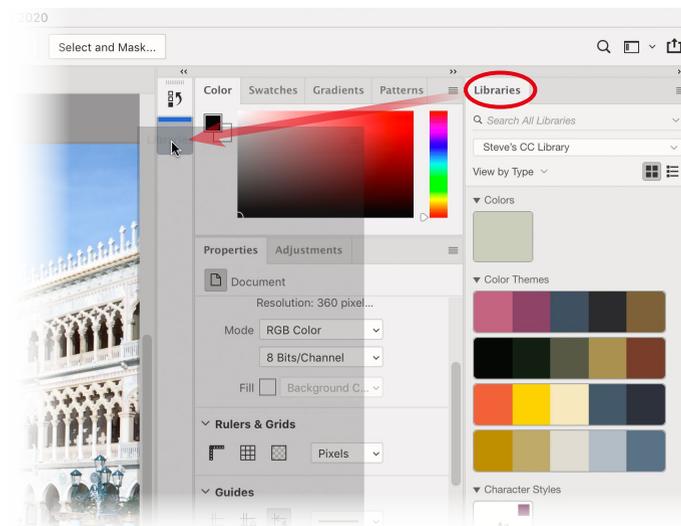
Drag the Libraries panel to the collapsed dock, just under the icon that's already there. Watch for the blue!
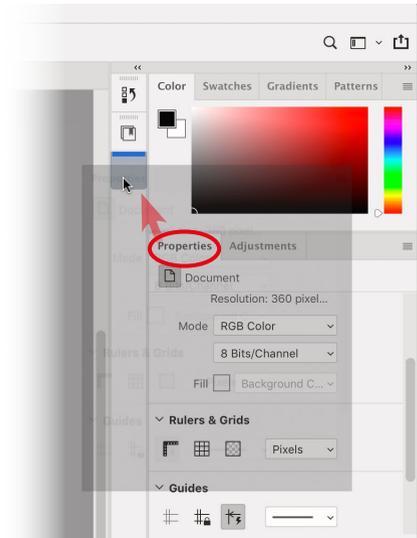
Drag the Properties panel just below the Libraries panel icon.

Create a New Workspace

This new arrangement is pleasant! One click on the icons in the collapsed dock reveals them, and another click conceals them again.

⮕ Since the panels appear to be just as we'd like them (for now), capture that arrangement by returning to the Workspace menu and choosing New Workspace…. Give it a name: I'm going with "A better start." Check the box for Toolbar too. If any of those panels go missing, or the expected tools aren't available in the Tools panel, or if the panels are simply messy, you can choose Reset A better start from that menu anytime.
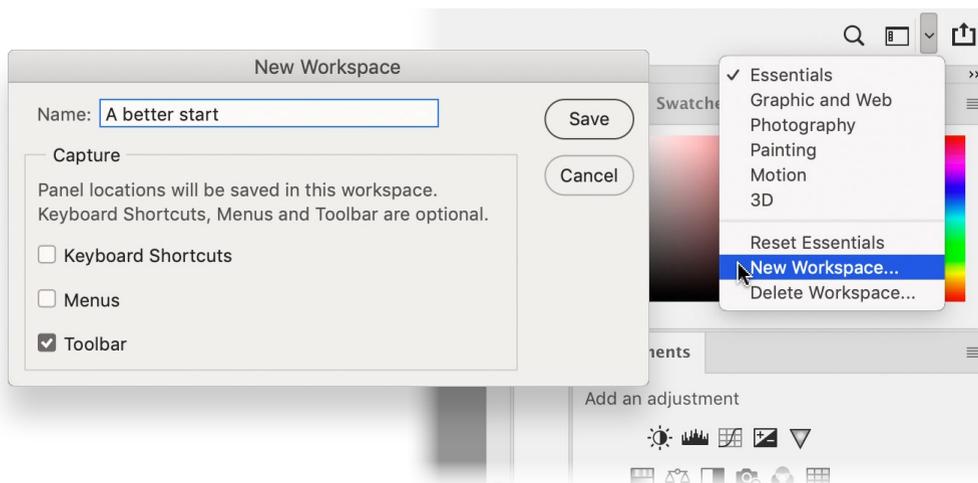
My friend John Cornicello, a wise Photoshop user, likes to keep the Tools panel on the right as well. He moves it by the texture at its top to the very right edge of the screen so that all his tools and panels are in the same place. For now, however, I will keep the tools in their original position.

It's very cool how much we can customize the interface! We can edit which tools are shown, the keyboard shortcuts, and even which menu items are visible. Consider the pranking possibilities!

Working Color Spaces

Last, a recommendation that will prove helpful when working with color output:

⮕ Choose Edit > Color Settings…. At the top, in the Settings menu, choose North America Prepress 2. Learn more about this in "Setting Working Space Profiles" (page 215).
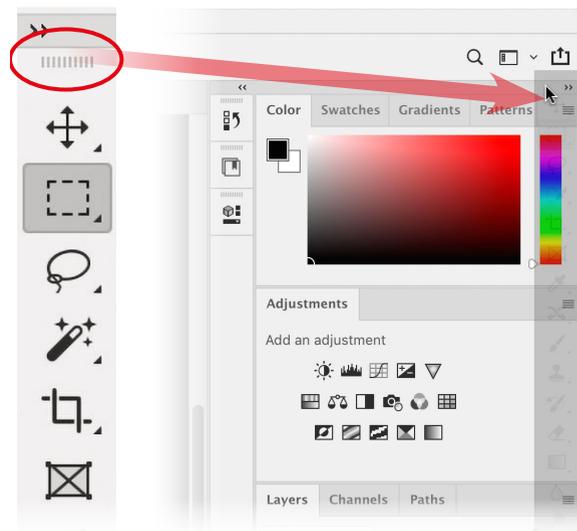
Project: Welcome to Photoshop

A quick project to illustrate several of the major functions of Photoshop: retouching, color adjustments, painting, filters, and compositing with masks.

Lesson A: Opening Multiple Images

Do you remember where you put the files you downloaded? In the main folder there is a folder called "Project A- Welcome" with the files we need for this project.

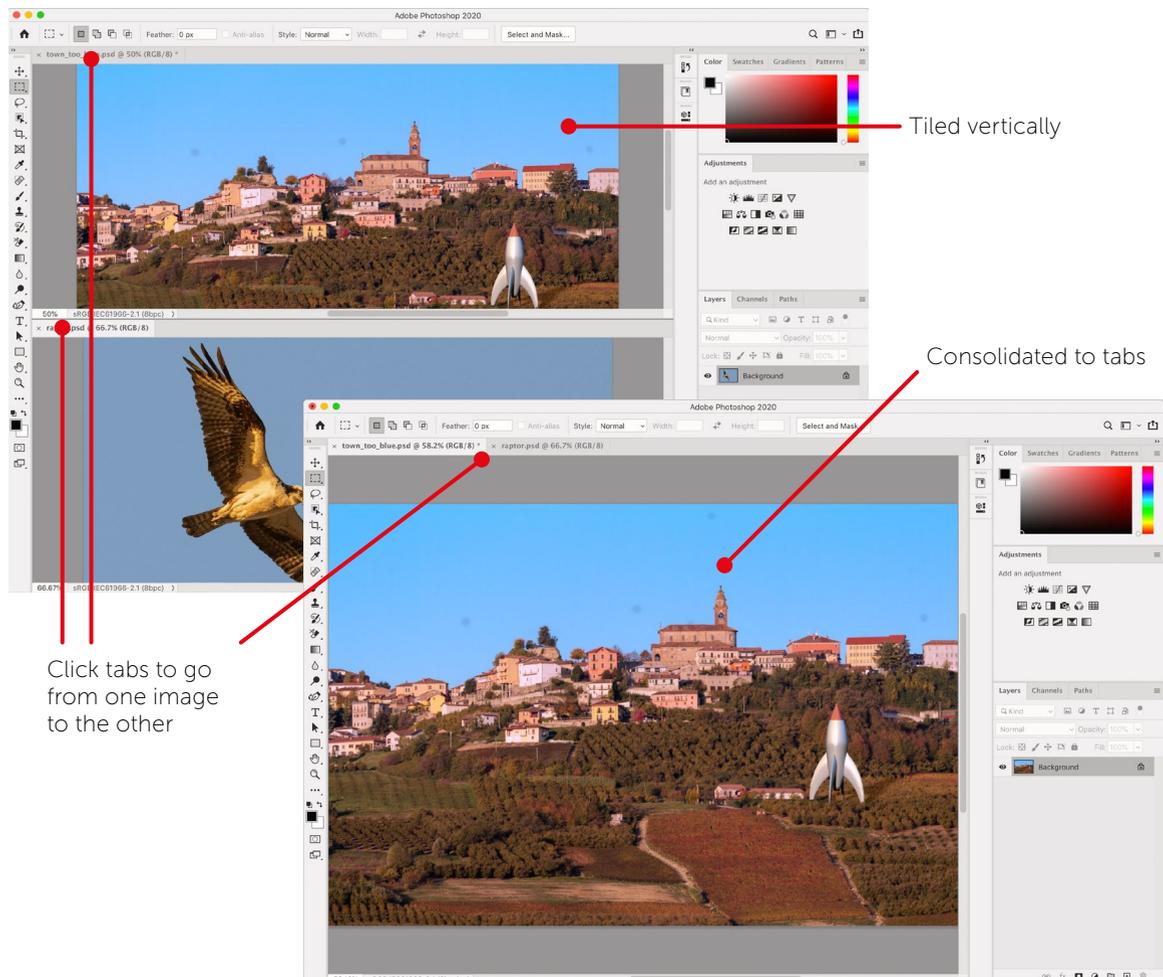➡ Open two of the files in that folder: "town_too_blue.psd" and "raptor.psd."

You may not realize both are open in Photoshop until you look closely toward the upper left of the interface. There's a tab for each document. Click each tab to go from one to the other.
　　You can see them side-by-side or one below the other if you wish:

➡ Choose Window > Arrange > Tile All Horizontally or Tile All Vertically.

That can be useful at times, but we'll find the space-saving aspect of tabs advantageous most of the time. So to get back to that:

➡ Choose Window > Arrange > Consolidate All to Tabs.

Tiled vertically

Consolidated to tabs

Click tabs to go from one image to the other

Layers &
Smart Objects

Adjustments
& Color

Brushes &
Painting

Selections
& Masks

Filters &
Transforms

Retouching
& Repair

Editing Raw
Files

Extending
Photoshop

Lesson B: Intro to Layers

We interrupt this exciting project (so soon?) to bring you a short explanatory exercise.

➡ From the "Project A- Welcome" folder, open the image called "trading faces.psd."

Backgrounds vs Pixel Layers

The most important feature in Photoshop is the Layers panel and what it contains. The longest (and first) chapter in this book's Compendium is called "Layers & Smart Objects." I can promise it will likely be the one you refer to most.

This document contains two layers, one of which is hidden. Look at the Layers panel in the lower-right corner of Photoshop's interface.

Active layer (highlighted)
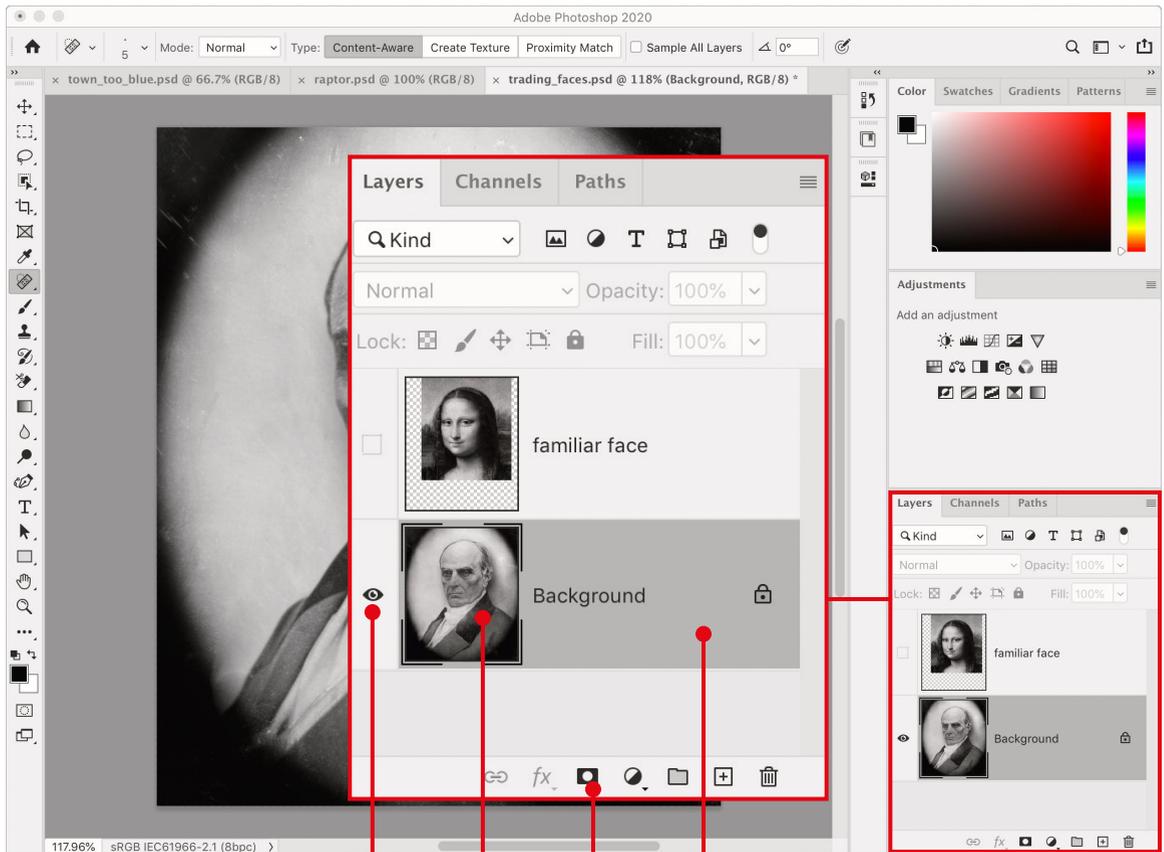
Create layer mask button

Right-click thumbnail to change its size

Layer visibility

The document has two layers of two different kinds: a Background and a pixel (or image) layer. Backgrounds are very limited: they have to be the bottom layer and they cannot have transparency. Sometimes we need to change layer stacking order or achieve transparency, so we end up converting the Background into a pixel layer or something called a Smart Object. Let's explore a few of these things.

➥ Right-click on either layer thumbnail and choose Large Thumbnails. When layers proliferate, you'll want them small again, but this should be helpful for now.

➥ Click the small square to the left of the layer called "familiar face." It's now visible.

➥ Click once near the top layer's name. The layer is now highlighted, which means it's the active layer.

When a layer is active, anything you do happens to that layer alone. We could move, blur, or lighten or darken it, and all other layers will remain untouched. We are going to mask this layer, hiding the bits we don't want to see. When we're done, her face will be on his head! But that's a little later.

➥ Click the little padlock near the Background's name. As you can see, it isn't a hard lock to pick!

Now that layer is no longer a Background. It needs a better name.

➥ Double-click the current name and type something. I think "grumpy face" is appropriate.

➥ Drag that layer just above the other one. You'll see a blue line appear when you get to the right spot. Then drag it below again.

Layers higher in the stack are in front of and obscure those below.

➥ Highlight the top layer ("familiar face"). Note the Opacity control near the top of the Layers panel.

There are several ways to make the layer less opaque. Try this: hover the cursor over the word Opacity and notice how it looks like a pointing hand with tiny arrows pointing right and left. That's a "scrubby cursor." It is available whenever you hover over the name of a numeric field. To "scrub" the value of that field, press and drag left or right to lower or raise (respectively) the value.

➥ Scrub the Opacity to the left to lower it. Note that I've already positioned that layer over the face of Mr. Grumpy. We'll learn about how to do that soon. Scrub the Opacity back to 100%.

We can now return to our actual project, but let's leave this document open for now. If you'd like to save it, press ⌘–S/Ctrl–S or choose File > Save.

Lesson C: Basic Retouching

The photo of the Italian hill town ("town_too_blue.psd") has several problems. First, I realize that it's kind of boring. Yes, it looks like a nice town, but there's nothing notable or unusual about it. That's why we're going to put a bird on it. Also, although it was photographed near sunset, the golden light seems to be missing. It's too blue. We'll fix that in Lesson D, shortly.

First, let's deal with those ugly blemishes in the sky. These appear to be bits of dust on my camera's sensor and so are likely in the photos I made shortly after this one too. To deal with these, we're going to use a powerful (but simple-to-use) tool and a professional workflow. See the "Retouching & Repair" chapter in the Compendium for much more.

Nondestructive Retouching

Retouching is almost always obscuring flaws or blemishes with more acceptable material. That is, we take good bits from one part of an image (or another one) and put those over the bad bits. Because I make mistakes or change my mind, I use layers when I do this. I put the good bits on their own layer. If I later realize I made an error, I simply erase that bit.

➡ In the image "town_too_blue.psd," create a new layer. Either use the Layers panel menu (the small lines in that panel's upper-right corner) to choose New Layer… or go to Layer > New > Layer…. This will open a dialog box that prompts for a name. Let's use "Retouch."

That is now the active (highlighted) layer in the Layers panel. Of the many tools Photoshop has for retouching, let's just go with the one that's used most often.

➡ In the Tools panel, select the Spot Healing Brush tool (it resembles a bandage with a dotted oval). Like many tools, this one needs its options adjusted before it's as good as we'd like it to be. In this case, to create repairs (good bits) on your new layer, you have more to do.

➡ Check the box that reads Sample All Layers in the Options Bar along the top of the screen. Otherwise, this tool won't even see the good pixels on the layer below, let alone sample them (pick them up).

➡ This tool uses a brush cursor to "paint" over blemishes. Use the bracket keys on your keyboard ([or]) to shrink or enlarge the brush so it's a little bigger than those sensor-dust spots. The size is noted near the left end of the Options Bar. I chose a size of about 80 pixels.

➡ "Paint" over the spot, *completely* covering it. This identifies the problem. Let go, and Photoshop fixes it!

Even the spot on the roof of the church is fixed easily. If you make a mistake, undo is a quick ⌘–Z/Ctrl–Z.

Spot Healing Brush
cursor sized

Blemish completely covered

Photoshop executes repair
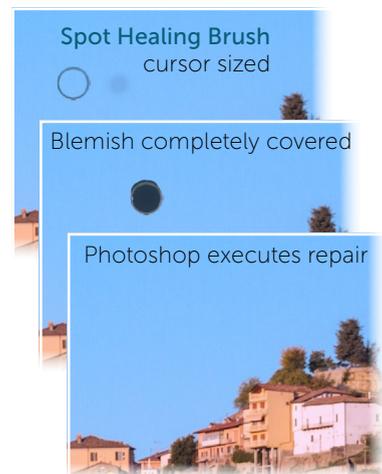
Lesson D: An Adjustment

At this point, the town image is composed of two layers. If you disable either layer's visibility, you'll see only the other. By toggling the visibility of the retouch layer, you'll enjoy a before and after. We can now perform an adjustment to get the color to its evening glory.

To adjust both layers simultaneously, we will use something called an adjustment layer. If it's above both the layers that make up our image, it will affect both. Adjustment layers affect only (and usually all) the layers below them.
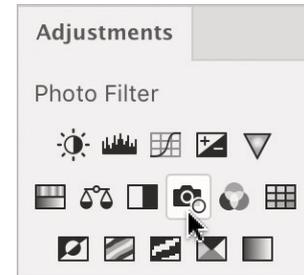
What's the Problem Here?

In this image's case, the issue is with color only, I believe. The image is neither too light nor too dark. That is, there is no *tonal* problem. Of course, this is Photoshop, so there are several adjustments from which to choose that affect color without affecting tone. We'll use a wonderfully effective and intuitive one called Photo Filter.

This adjustment simulates putting a colored piece of glass in front of a camera's lens. Photographers use such filters to colorize the scene in front of them to "warm" or "cool" the scene, for example.

➡ In the Adjustments panel, click on the icon near the center that resembles a camera. This creates a Photo Filter adjustment layer. Look at the Layers panel. If this new layer isn't at the top, above the others, drag it there.

The Properties panel should be showing the options available for this adjustment. It also defaults to a classic Warming Filter (85), which simulates a standard 85 filter photographers may carry in their bags. This is a step in approximately the right direction. The blueness is too cold, so warming is right. But this choice is more orange than the yellow we need.

➡ In the Properties panel, choose Yellow from the Filter menu. To enhance the effect, increase the Density by dragging its slider or scrubbing the word "Density" to about the halfway point. The image now resembles my recollection.

It still needs something to liven it up.
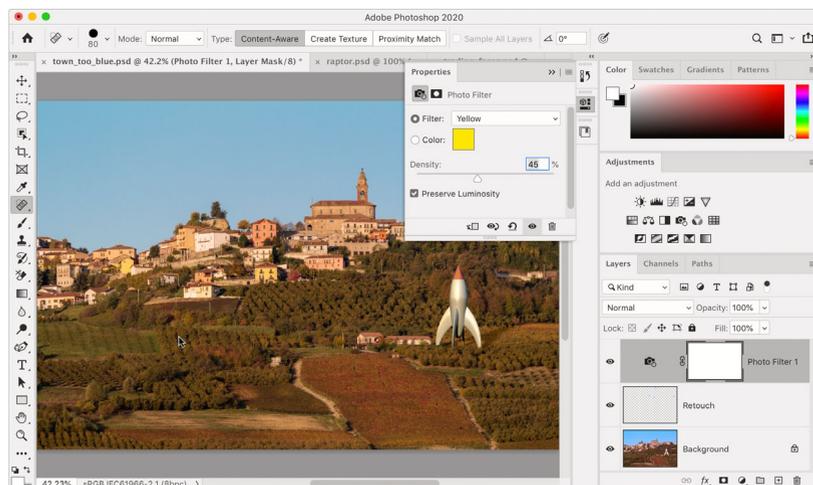
Lesson E: Layers on the Move

Now we'll take a look at the image called "raptor.psd." In it, an osprey flies against a blue sky near sunset. It would make a lovely addition to our Italian countryside image. Once this osprey image is added, we'll go about removing the blue sky to leave only the bird.

Drag, Keep Dragging, and Drop

It's slightly tricky to use a "drag-and-drop" method of copying a layer to another document, but its speed makes it worth the trouble.
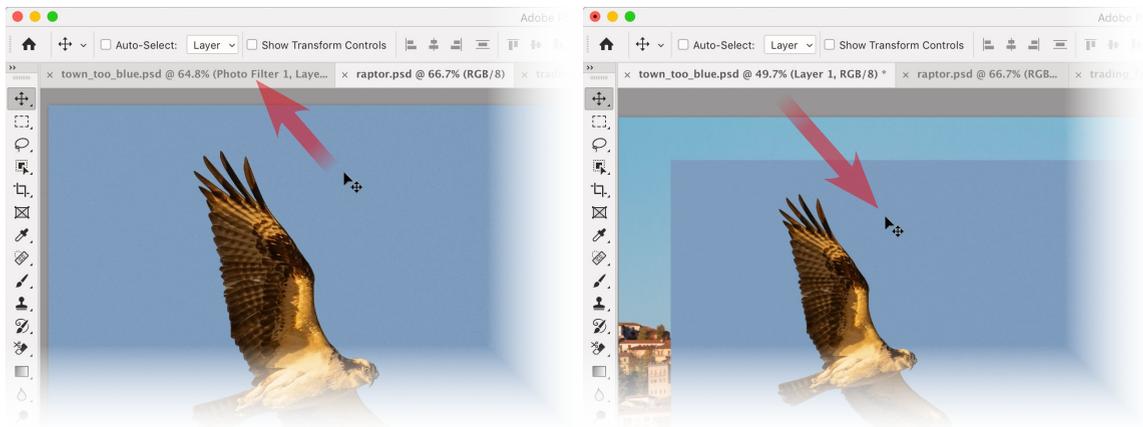
In one continuous action, using the Move tool, drag the layer you want to copy to the tab of the document to which you want to copy it, pausing when that destination image appears, then continuing to drag down onto the destination's canvas.

➥ Choose the Move tool (V) from the Tools panel (it's at the top).

➥ Position the cursor somewhere within the image, then, *in one go*, drag the image to the tab with the name of our destination image (town_too_blue.psd), ***do not release the mouse when that image appears***, continue to drag down onto the destination image, and then release. To repeat: drag the image up to the other tab, pause (without releasing) until the other image appears, drag down into the other image's document window, and release.

➥ Double-click the layer's name to rename it "osprey."

Or you can use old-fashioned copy and paste if the layer you're copying isn't a Background:

➥ In the Layers panel of raptor.psd, click the padlock on the Background to convert it to a pixel layer. Double-click the layer's name to rename it "osprey."

➥ With that layer highlighted, choose Edit > Copy or use the shortcut ⌘–C/Ctrl–C.

➥ Go to the destination image, town_too_blue.psd. Highlight the top layer so the pasted one appears above it. Then choose Edit > Paste or use ⌘–V/Ctrl–V to paste.
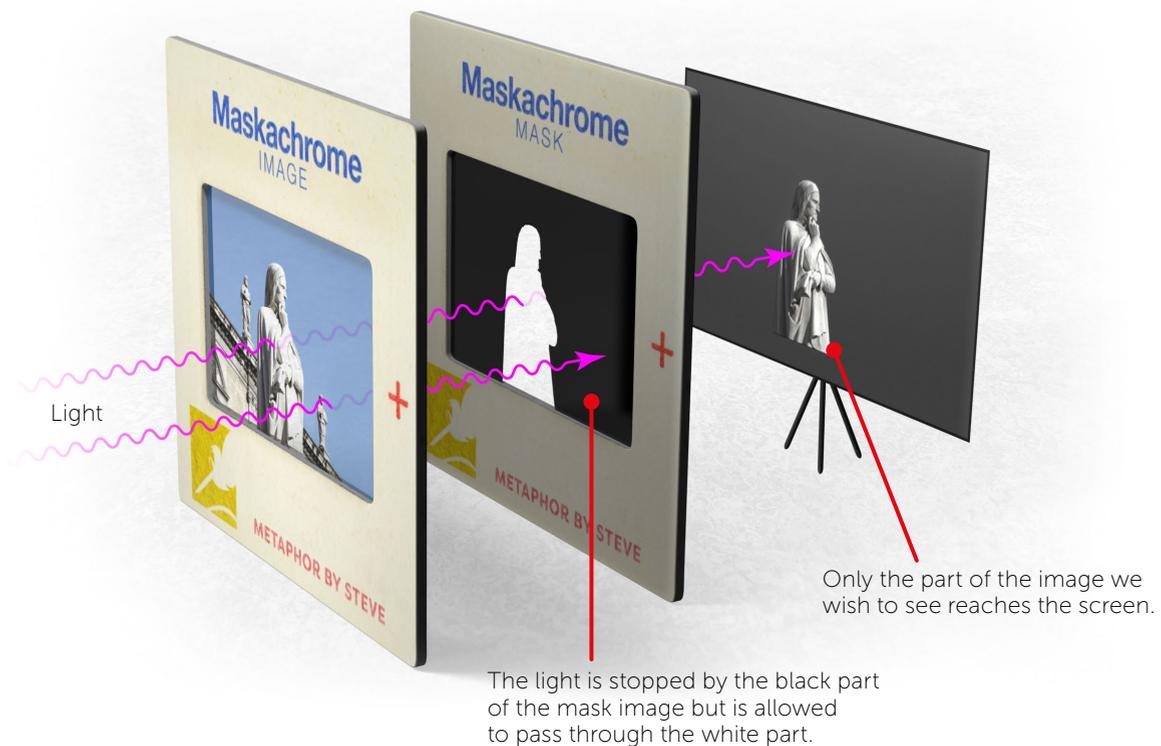
To remove the sky and leave only the osprey, we'll have to create a mask. Read on!

The Course

Lesson F: Selections & Masking

Selections are a big part of Photoshop. They're how we tell the application which pixels we want to affect. Masks are a means of hiding pixels, areas of an image we don't want to see. We *could* delete those pixels, but we might regret it. I make mistakes and change my mind sometimes, and so do my clients. You too? Hiding areas with a mask means we can reveal those pixels if minds change or errors are discovered. That's why masking is considered a best practice.

Masking Metaphor

Let's borrow a visual from the "Selections & Masks" chapter of the Compendium. You really should check out "A Metaphor and Example" (page 286) for the full story. But in brief, a mask acts like a kind of light-block that prevents the entire image from being visible. And it does this without damaging the image.

Light

Only the part of the image we wish to see reaches the screen.

The light is stopped by the black part of the mask image but is allowed to pass through the white part.

A Warm-Up

Let's briefly return to the image called "trading faces.psd." It's got two layers and, like our Italian scene, the top one needs to lose some content so it can blend in with what's below.

The Course

Basic Procedure to Make a Mask

The first thing to do is to indicate which pixels should remain visible. For this image, that will be the central parts of Mona Lisa's face.

In this case, we don't need high precision, so we'll select that area with the Lasso tool (L).

The **Lasso tool**

Active selection around face
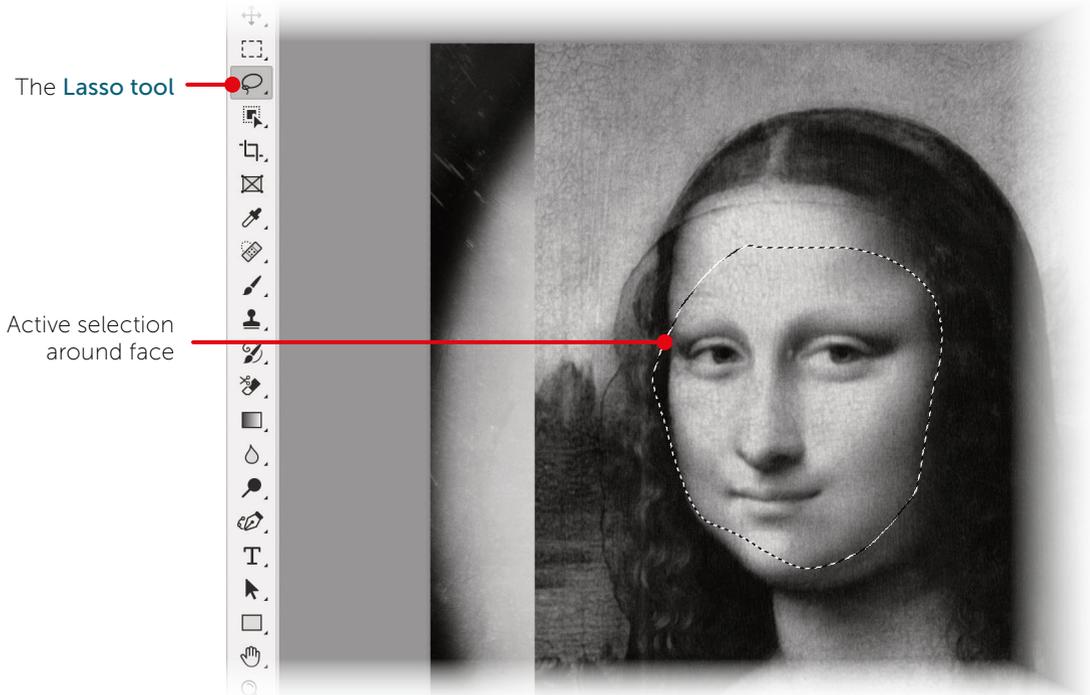
➡ Make sure the "familiar face" layer is highlighted.

➡ Tap the L key to activate the Lasso tool. Some tools have intuitive shortcuts like that, most don't. Look at the Tools panel and you'll see that the Lasso tool is now active.

➡ Press and drag to draw around the main parts of her face. You don't need to be too careful this time. But if you really are unhappy with the first attempt, click just once outside your current selection and then try again.

➡ You now have a selection marquee (nickname: "marching ants"). You're ready to make the mask.

➡ Click the Add layer mask button (⬤) at the bottom of the Layers panel, or choose Layer > Layer Mask > Reveal Selection. I know it looks pretty bad so far.

➡ Open the Properties panel. Choose Window > Properties to do so. The Window menu is where all Photoshop's panels are listed.

Basic Mask Properties

Since you just created the mask, it is targeted, or active. If you look carefully at the Layers panel, you'll see little brackets around the mask thumbnail that has appeared on the "familiar face" layer. The Properties panel will also indicate that the mask is the active part of the active

layer. If you click once on the image thumbnail, the Properties panel will say "Pixel Layer" at the top. Clicking on the mask thumbnail shows the mask's properties. We're going to blur (or feather) this mask.

➡ Drag the Feather slider (or scrub the word "Feather") until her face is blending in a bit with his head. I find that a value of about 20 pixels works well in this case.

The edges of the familiar face are now translucent, fading away to cause this blending. If you were to disable the visibility of the grumpy face layer, you'd see her face fading into a checker-board pattern (Photoshop's way of indicating transparent areas).

When I adjusted Feather, the result was pretty good, except on the left side where some of her hair was still visible.

Take a good look at that mask thumbnail. Notice that it's black where pixels are hidden and white where they're shown. If we paint with black on that mask, we'll hide those last bits. Painting with white reveals pixels again.

Painting on Masks

Again, be sure the mask thumbnail is active.

Color swapper　　The **Brush tool**　　The **Brush tool** cursor　　　　　The mask is active
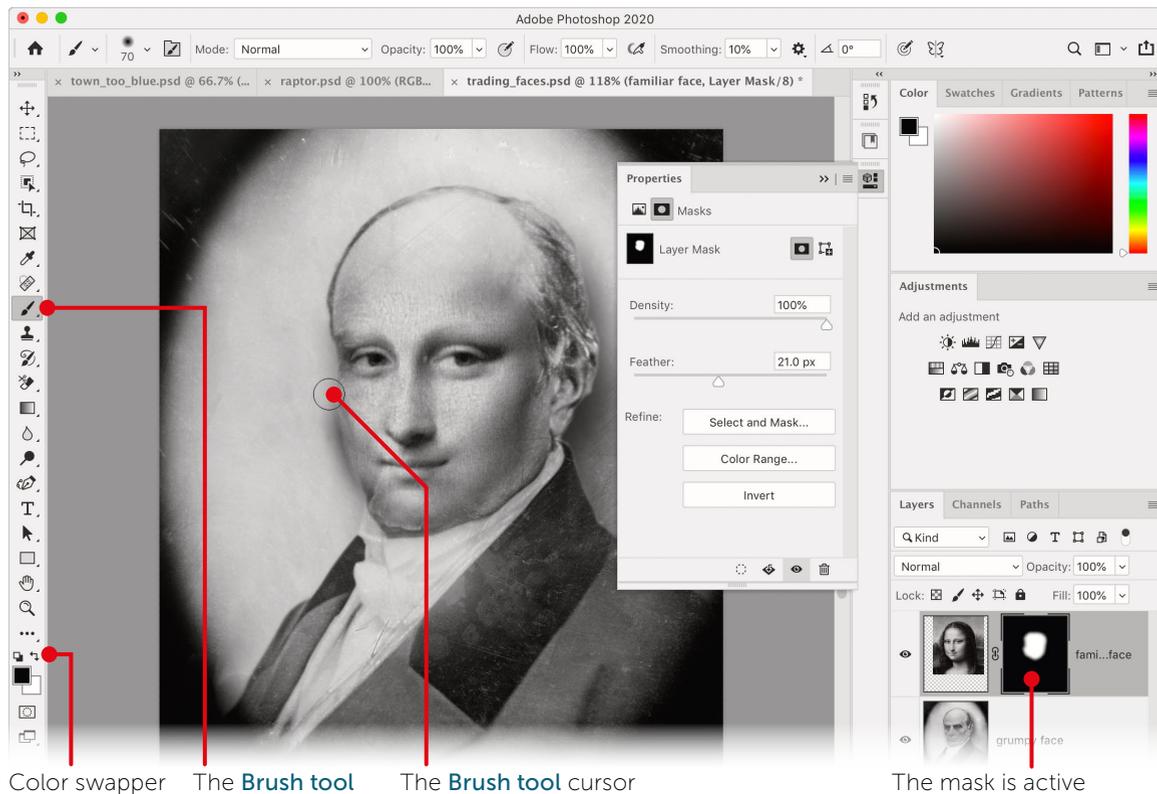
➡ Choose the Brush tool by tapping the B key.

Note near the bottom of the Tools panel that the Foreground and Background colors are

white and black (the defaults). If not, tapping D for "default" makes it so. When you paint, it's the Foreground color that gets applied. We want that to be black so we can hide the last bits of the Mona Lisa image. If the colors are in the wrong position, click the two-headed arrow near those color chips to swap them, or tap the X key to do so. I told you some shortcuts are not intuitive.

➡ Ensure the Foreground color is black.

The brush is likely too small if it's still at its default size. Also, it's likely a round, fuzzy brush, which is the perfect character for our mask.

➡ Resize the brush by using the square bracket keys ([and]), us-
ing the right bracket to make the brush bigger. It appears I went
with a brush that is 70 pixels across. You can check the size at
the top of the screen in the Options Bar.
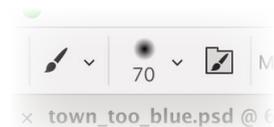
➡ Press and drag to paint along the left side of her face (I suppose it's *her* right side, but it's to *our* left).

As you paint, it looks like erasure, but the pixels are merely being hidden. If you were to paint with white, they would reappear.

The grumpy face is now obscured by Mona Lisa's more pleasant, if mysterious, one.

➡ Choose File > Save, then either choose File > Close or click the small X in the image's tab.

A Few Possible Methods

Now back to our osprey and quaint Italian hill town in town_too_blue.psd. We need to select the osprey, then, when we add the mask, all else on that layer will be hidden. There are several tools that allow us to select subjects against homogeneous backgrounds like that blue sky around the raptor. For much, much more on the following selection methods, set aside time to peruse the "Selections & Masks" chapter of this book's Compendium.

➡ Highlight the osprey layer, then select the Object Selection tool (W; or fourth from the top).

Select Subject

This is a relatively new method. It's also under ongoing development, so if it doesn't work as you expect today, try it again when there's an update to Photoshop.

➡ When certain selection tools, like the Object Selection tool, are active, the Select Subject
button appears in the Options Bar. Click it! If another tool is active, you can access this
function from the Select menu by choosing Select > Subject.

➡ As of this writing, this command does a nearly perfect job. However, it doesn't quite cap-
ture the feathers at the wingtips well enough. Perhaps by the time you read this, it will.

➡ Since this isn't quite right, and we wish to try something else, choose Select > Deselect or
use the shortcut ⌘–D/Ctrl–D.

Object Selection Tool Intro

➡ This tool is like a guided Select Subject. Use it to draw a box around the osprey, and it will do a fairly good job as well. But again, it lacks where there are tight twists and turns.

➡ Since this isn't quite right, and we wish to try something else, choose Select > Deselect or use the shortcut ⌘–D/Ctrl–D.

Quick Selection Tool Intro

This tool is a little more work. With it, we "paint" over material we want selected and it learns about the colors and textures we're after. I find that if you paint a little, release, paint a little more, release, etc., it does better than if you try to paint over an entire object at once. This is true, at any rate, for subjects more entangled in their environments than a bird of prey. With this image, you may do well enough by painting continuously over the osprey.

➡ Right-click on the Object Selection tool to reveal the tools hidden behind it. One is called the Quick Selection tool—choose it. The cursor will be a smallish brush (a circle).

➡ Keeping the cursor within the bird's perimeter, paint over its length. Avoid getting too close to the edge of the subject. If the brush touches blue sky, stop, undo, and try again more carefully.

If we were to zoom in and use progressively tinier brush sizes, we would be able to select the osprey very well. However, we should note that the bird is in front of a backdrop that's very different than it is in color and tone. And just as moviemakers use blue and green screens to isolate subjects and put them in different circumstances, so can we.

➡ There's an easier way for this image, so choose Select > Deselect or use ⌘–D/Ctrl–D.

Magic Wand

To use this tool advantageously, we have to know there exists a command that inverts a selection: selecting what wasn't, and deselecting what was. We note this because the blue pixels and the transparent ones surrounding the bird are very easy to select. We can then invert that selection to have a very precise selection of our subject.

➡ Right-click on the Quick Selection tool to reveal the Magic Wand tool—choose it. The cursor will resemble the tool icon, a magic wand. Since this is the oldest of these tools, I sometimes call it the Elder Wand.

➡ Click once on the transparent pixels surrounding the entire osprey layer.

➡ Then, to add the blue pixels to that selection, hold down the Shift key and click on part of the blue sky around the osprey. You now have a great selection of everything except the bird.

➡ Choose Select > Inverse. Awesome!

➡ Click the Add layer mask button (⬤) at the bottom of the Layers panel, or choose Layer > Layer Mask > Reveal Selection.

➡ Switch to the Move tool (V) and drag the bird wherever you want it.

Lesson G: Intro to Smart Objects and Filters

Now, just one last thing bothers me. If a bird like that was photographed with a long focal length lens, the backdrop would be somewhat out of focus. If we don't arrange that, the town in the background competes with the osprey visually. Let's get eyes to focus on the bird, since it's the most interesting thing in the photo.

➡ Highlight the Background in the Layers panel by clicking near its name.

➡ Holding down the Shift key, click near the name of the retouch layer so its highlighted too.

We're going to put both of those into a Smart Object, a kind of container layer that can hold many different kinds of data. The biggest benefit to us is that a Smart Object can have many different kinds of effects applied to it that can be edited or removed later if we wish. We're gong to apply one of Photoshop's many blur filters. Smart Objects and all the various layer types are covered in, you guessed it, the Compendium. Filters too.
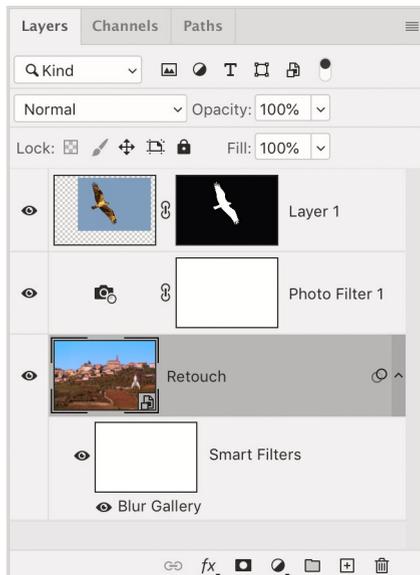
The final result of our labors
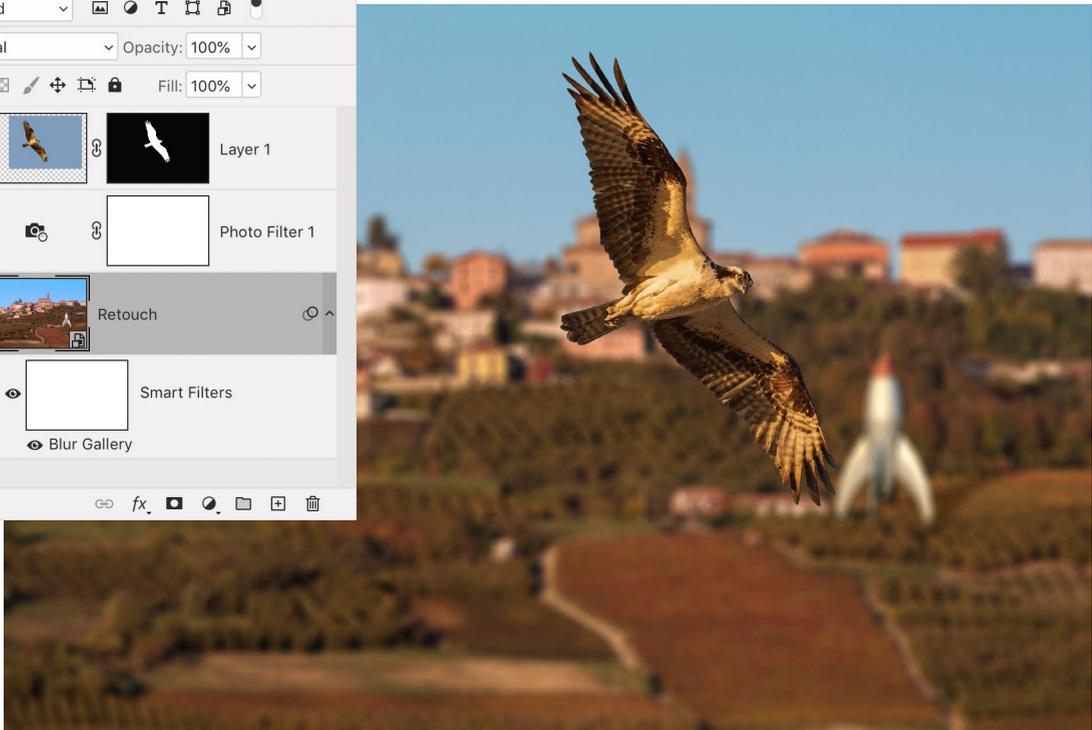
➡ With both layers highlighted, right-click on either one, then choose Convert to Smart Object. Those layers are now safely inside the Smart Object.

➡ Choose Filter > Blur Gallery > Field Blur. Don't be startled as the whole interface becomes dedicated to this function.

In the upper right of the interface, you'll see a slider for the amount of Blur. At the top of the interface are a few options, including the OK button we'll use to commit this filter.

⮕ Use the slider or scrub the word "Blur" to get the amount that is pleasing to you. I like it at about 20 pixels for this image.

⮕ Since any noise in the image has been blurred away, giving a too-smooth look, use the lower-right Noise panel to add some grain: about 10% will do for an Amount to match the noise on the osprey.

⮕ Enable the High Quality checkbox at the top of the interface and click OK. When the filter is finished applying, you'll see it listed under the layer's entry in the Layers panel.

A Note Regarding Navigation

There will be times when you'd like to zoom in or pan across an image in which you have zoomed. This seems a fine time to cover that.

Most tools have a letter that accesses them: B for the Brush tool or J for the Spot Healing Brush tool are examples. Z for Zoom tool and H for Hand tool are two more. However, we rarely want to use those tools for more than a moment, and then only to better see what we're doing with other tools. Here's what I recommend:

⮕ Choose a generic tool. A safe one is the Rectangular Marquee tool; tap M to select it. We're not going to use it, but it doesn't hurt anything if you accidentally use it.

⮕ Hold down (don't tap) the Z key and keep holding it! Look at the cursor if it's over the image. It should resemble a magnifier.

⮕ Keep holding down that Z! With the cursor over the osprey, use your mouse to press-and-drag rightward slowly. You're zooming in. Leftward is zooming out. Zoom in a good bit. Release the mouse, then (finally) release the Z key.

When you're done, you should be zoomed on the bird and the active tool should still be the Rectangular Marquee tool. Yes, this does take a little practice. The beauty of this trick is that it works with any tool that has a letter shortcut and that you need only momentarily. Try one more. Since you're zoomed in, let's trying panning.

⮕ Hold down the H key (as in "hand"). Drag in the image to explore other parts of it. You're panning with the Hand tool.

⮕ When done, release the H key.

⮕ To see the entire image, use the shortcut ⌘-0/Ctrl-0 (that's a zero!).

⮕ Save your hard work (⌘-S/Ctrl-S).

Well done.