

Introduction to Photoshop and Layers

Adobe Photoshop Elements is an advanced photo editing and graphics program that allows you to create or edit photo quality images. In this Chapter you will be introduced to its screen and some of its basic features, such as Layers. Layers are a vital part of using Photoshop and you need to develop an understanding of how to use them in order to use Photoshop effectively.

Starting Photoshop Elements

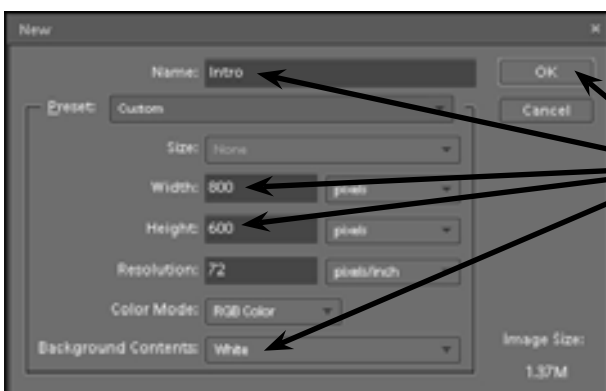
- 1 Load Photoshop Elements 6.



- 2 If you receive the WELCOME screen set the bottom left box to START UP WITH EDITOR and click on the EDIT button.

NOTE: Setting the left box to **START UP WITH EDITOR** means that the program will open immediately in the **EDITOR** screen. The **WINDOW** menu can be used to reopen the **WELCOME** screen when needed.

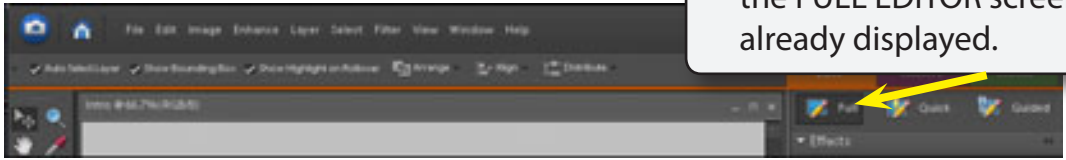
- 3 Display the FILE menu, highlight NEW and select BLANK FILE. You will be asked to enter the required settings for the document.



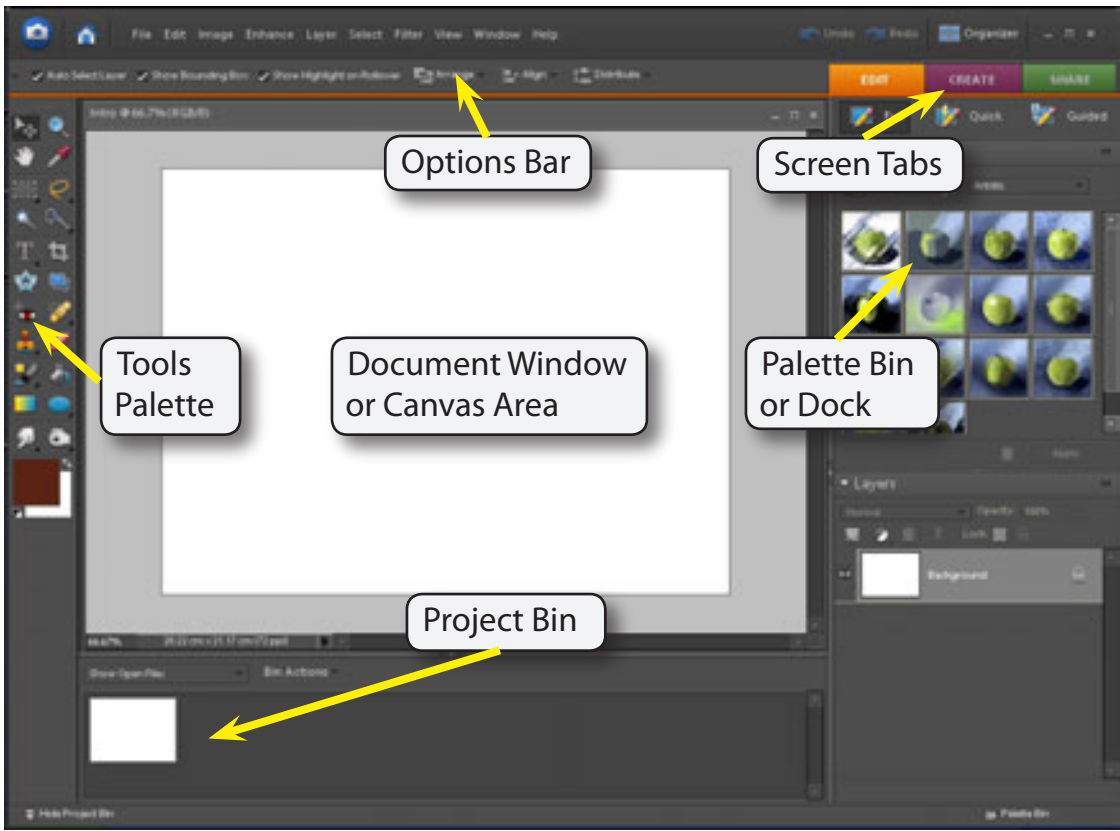
- 4 Enter the NAME: Intro
Set the WIDTH to 800 pixels, the HEIGHT to 600 pixels, the BACKGROUND CONTENTS to WHITE, leave the other default settings for now and select OK.

5 A blank page should be created.

6 Click on the FULL button to open the FULL EDITOR screen if it is not already displayed.



7 The following diagram labels the sections of the FULL EDITOR screen.



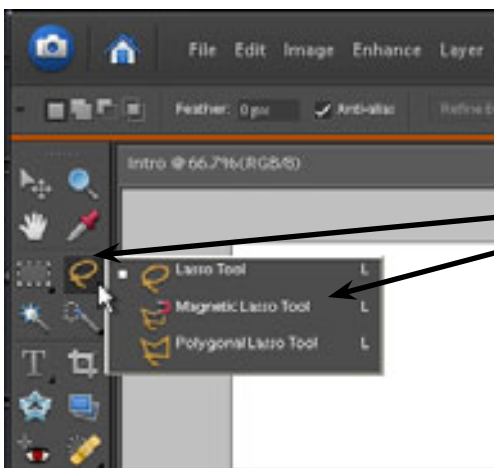
NOTE:

- i The Project Bin displays thumbnails of the files that you have open.
- ii The Screen Tabs allow you to change the screen views between EDIT, CREATE and SHARE modes. Each of these modes have sub-tabs associated with them.
- iii The Palette Bin displays palettes of tools and options. These palettes can be opened from the WINDOW menu.

The Tools Palette

The TOOLS palette at the left of the screen provides general drawing and photo adjustment tools. If you are using a large screen, the tools are displayed as a single column. If you are using a small screen, the tools in two columns.

- 1 In these tutorials the TOOLS palette will be used as 2 columns.
- 2 Tools that have a small arrow next to them have more tools within them.

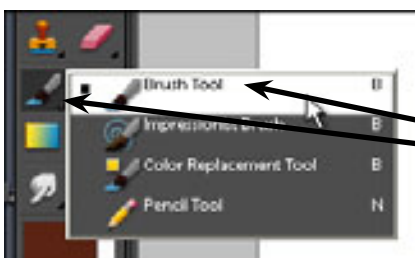


3 Click and hold on the LASSO tool the three lasso tool types will be displayed.

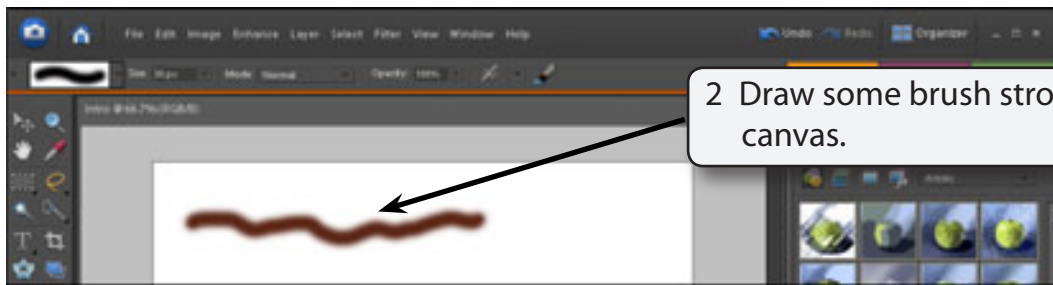
- 4 Click and hold on some of the other tools to see what extra tools they contain.
- 5 The letter displayed next to a tool when you click and hold on it is the keyboard shortcut to select the tool. Try pressing some letters and the tool corresponding to that letter should be selected.
- 6 Hold down the SHIFT key and press a letter. The tools within that tool group will be toggled.

Using the Tools

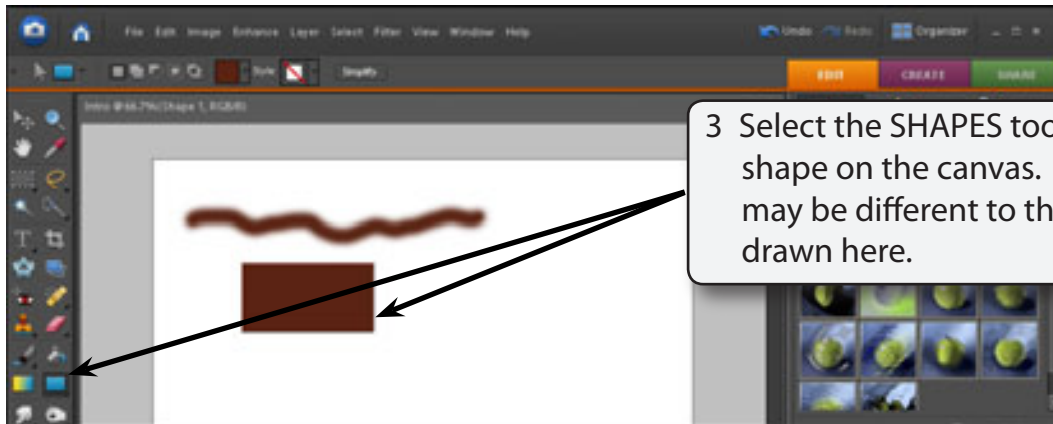
We will have a quick look at some of Photoshop's basic drawing tools. You may need to click and hold on a tool to select it, depending on who has used to program before you.



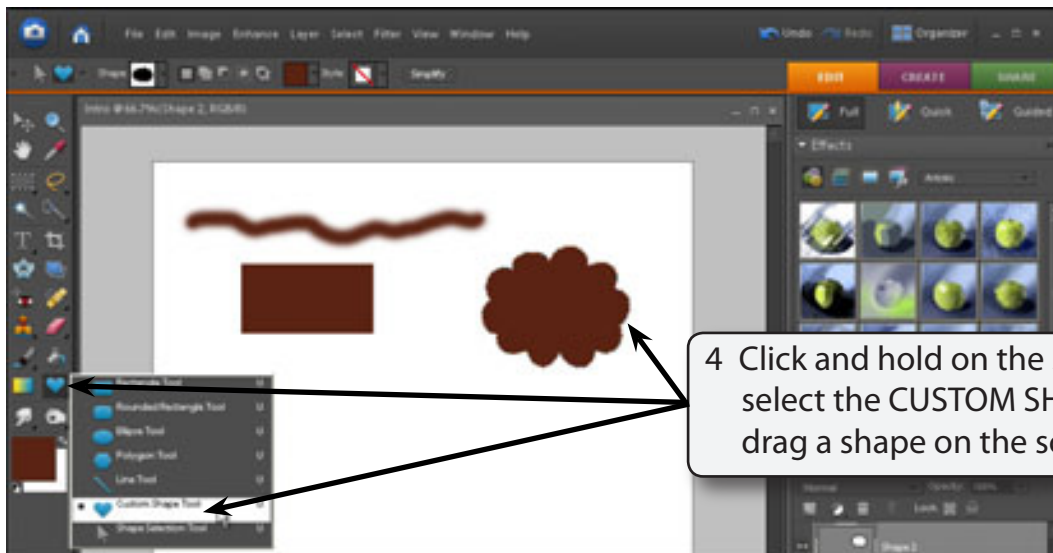
1 Select the BRUSH TOOL from the TOOLS palette.



2 Draw some brush strokes on the canvas.

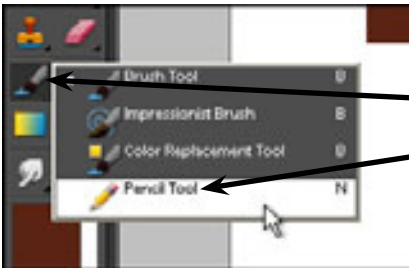


3 Select the SHAPES tool and drag a shape on the canvas. Your shape may be different to the rectangle drawn here.

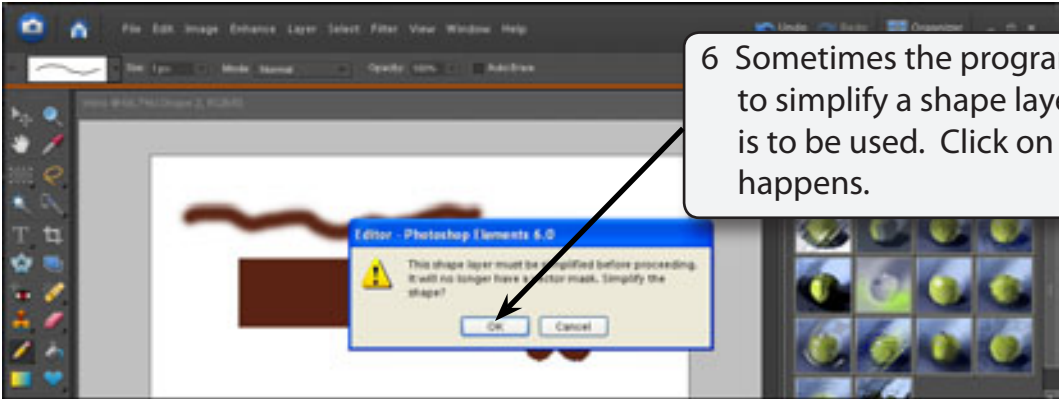


4 Click and hold on the SHAPES TOOL, select the CUSTOM SHAPE TOOL and drag a shape on the screen.

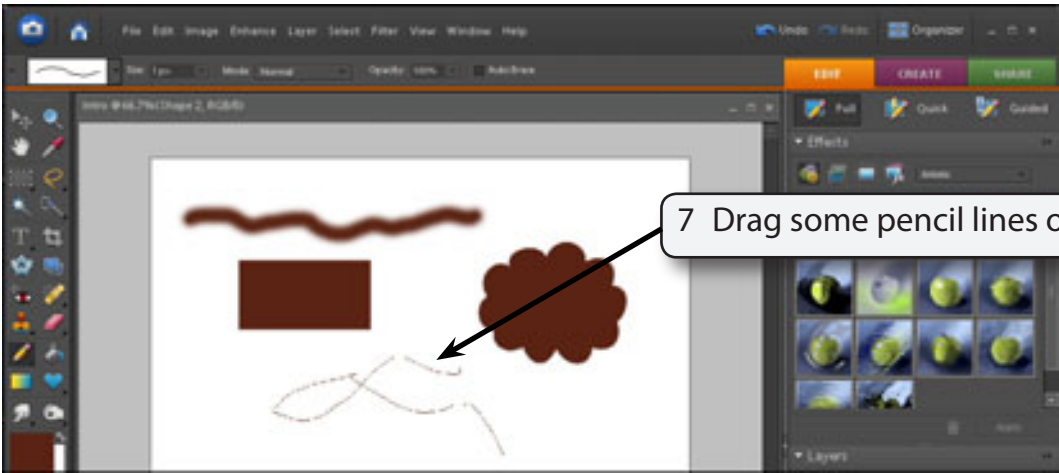
NOTE: Your shape will probably be different to the one displayed. The SHAPE box in the OPTIONS BAR at the top of the screen can be used to select different shapes.



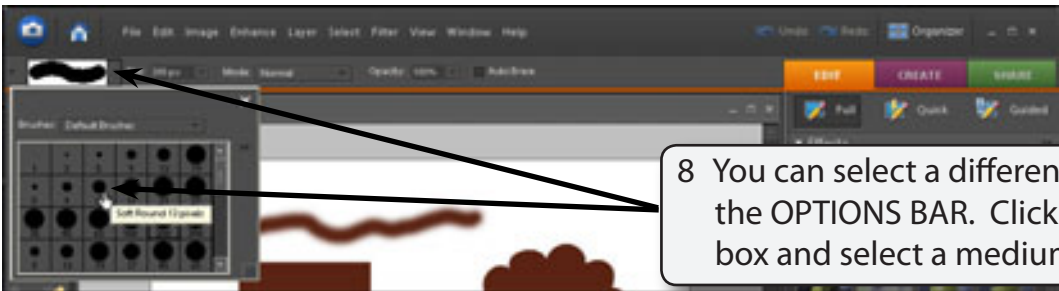
5 Select the PENCIL TOOL from the BRUSH TOOL in the TOOLS palette and click on the canvas.



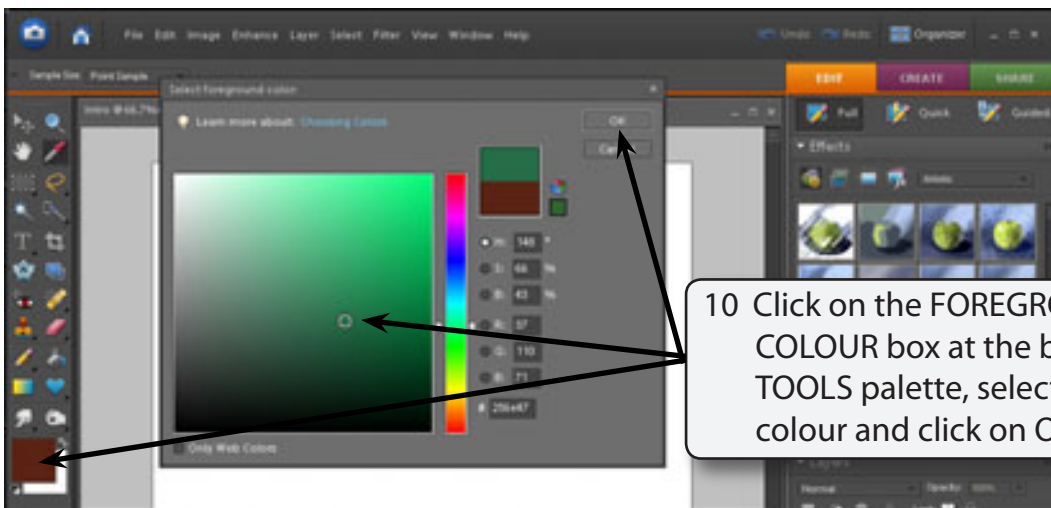
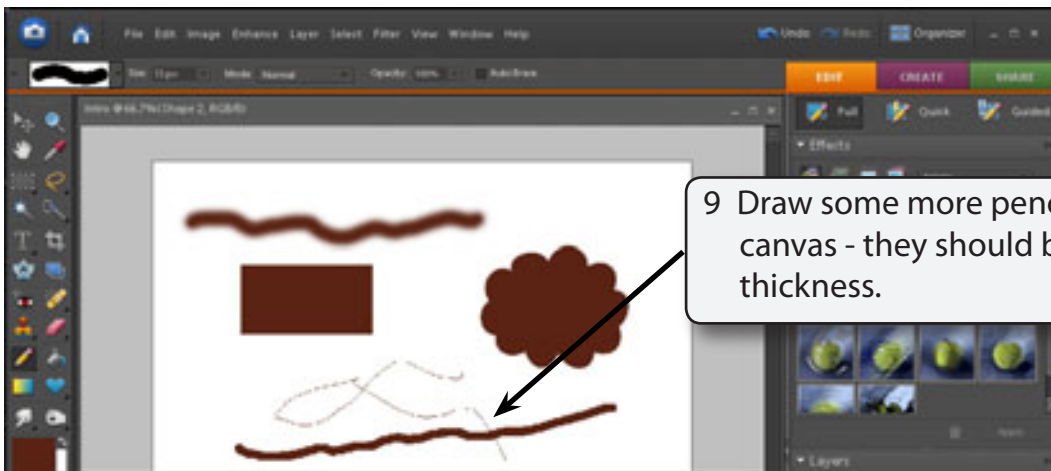
6 Sometimes the program will ask you to simplify a shape layer when a tool is to be used. Click on OK when this happens.



7 Drag some pencil lines on the canvas.



8 You can select a different BRUSH from the OPTIONS BAR. Click on the BRUSH box and select a medium sized brush.



NOTE: You can use the vertical slider at the centre of the **SELECT FOREGROUND COLOUR** dialogue box to select different colour shades.