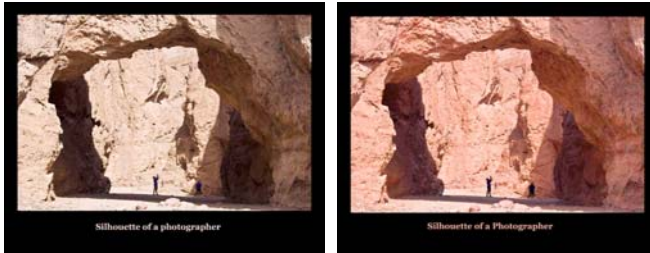


Layers revisited.

Open your image in Photoshop Elements. These instructions apply to 20080211-094-8bit.tif in AP¹ Elements version 5.



Add a black background or frame

- On the menu bar, click Image — Resize — Canvas Size.
- In Canvas Size dialogue box:
- Increase Width by 3 cm (about 10%);
- Increase height by 5 cm (a bit more than the increase in width).
- Leave Relative unchecked; leave Anchor as it is;
- Set Canvas extension color to Black;
- Click OK.

This will give us the black background.

We need to move the image up so that the top border is the same as the sides and to leave room for the title below.

Put the image on a new layer as follows:

- On the menu bar, click Layer — Duplicate Layer ...
- In the Duplicate layer dialogue box, change text in the As: box to “Original” and click OK.

Nothing visible happens. To see the new layer, open the layers palette (Window — Layers). You will see two layers, named “Layer 1” and “Background”. Let’s change the name of Layer 1 to “Original”, for our convenience.

Now we are going to remove the image from the Background layer and fill that layer with black.

- In the Layers palette, click on the eye icon for the “Original” layer. The eye icon will disappear but nothing else will change on the screen because both layers are the same.
- In the Layers palette, click on the “Background” layer. Anything we do to the image will now only affect the “Background” layer.
- Click anywhere in the image window. On the keyboard, click Ctrl-a. This selects the entire image.
- Fill the entire image with black. (On the menu bar click Edit — Fill Selection; in the Fill Layer dialogue box set “Use:” to black and leave the rest alone; click OK).
- Bring the original layer back into view by clicking where its eye icon was on the Layers palette.

Now we can move the “Original” layer to get it in the right place on the background.

- In the Layers palette, click on the “Original” layer to make it the active one.

¹ Adobe Photoshop

- On the Toolbar, select the Move tool.
- In the image window, click on the image and drag it upwards until the width of the black border at the top is the same as at the sides.

Text layers

To add text:

- On the toolbar, click on the Text tool. Choose the font and size you want in the text properties bar at the top. For the colour, choose something that will show over black.
- On the image, click where you want the text to be and type the title of the picture.

Notice that the title appears where you placed the pointer. Also, a new layer has been automatically created with just the text on it. Having the text on a separate layer allows you to move it around and also to edit the text later, if necessary.

Adjustment layers

A layer may be one that adjusts the layers below it. (Analogous to, for example, having a stack of transparent layers, with background, image and text on them, and placing a semi-transparent coloured layer on top of the stack.)

For example, we will create a layer that increases the saturation of this image.

- In the Layers Palette, click on the top layer (so that the new layer will go on top of the whole stack).
- On the menu bar, click Layer — New Adjustment Layer — Hue/Saturation ...
- In the New Layer dialogue box, click OK. The new layer is created and selected.
- In the Hue/Saturation dialogue box (that comes up automatically) type “-10” for the Hue adjustment and “30” for the Saturation adjustment. Click OK.

Layer masks

This image lacks mid-tone values, it has bright and dark areas but little in between. We really need to brighten the dark areas and darken the light areas. With do this with two layers, one that brightens and one that darkens. Then, we use a layer mask to select the areas to apply the adjustments to.

Make the two new adjustment layers

- In the Layers Palette, click on the top layer (so that the new layer will go on top of the whole stack).
- On the menu bar, click Layer — New Adjustment Layer — Levels ...
- In the New Layer dialogue box, change the layer’s name to “Brighten”, then click OK. The new layer is created and selected and the Levels dialogue box appears.
- In the Levels dialogue box, change the centre input level from 1.00 to 1.20. Click OK.

The whole image will look brighter. Now let’s make the Darken layer in the same way.

- In the Layers Palette, click on the top layer (so that the new layer will go on top of the whole stack).
- On the menu bar, click Layer — New Adjustment Layer — Levels ...
- In the New Layer dialogue box, change the layer’s name to “Darken”, then click OK. The new layer is created and selected and the Levels dialogue box appears.
- In the Levels dialogue box, change the centre input level from 1.00 to 0.8. Click OK.

This gets us back pretty much where we started.

Edit the layer masks

Now we use the layer masks to selectively brighten or darken the appropriate areas of the image.

Every adjustment layer has a layer mask, automatically. Initially, the layer mask is completely white, which allows the effect of the adjustment layer to shine through. We can paint black onto the mask to hide the effect of the adjustment layer in specific places.

Often, a paintbrush is used to paint on the black masking effect. In this case, however, we will make a selection and then fill it with black.

Select the shadow areas

We'll select the shadows on the "Original" layer, save the selection and then use the saved selection to fill in our masks.

- On the Layers palette: turn off the visibility (eye icons) of all the layers except "Original". Click on the "Original" layer.
- On the toolbar, select the magic wand tool.
- On the tool preferences bar, select the single square icon (New Selection), set Tolerance: to 50, tick "Anti-alias" and clear "Contiguous" and "Sample All Layers".
- On the image itself, click in the darker shadow area. This makes an initial selection that we will now refine.
- Go back to the tool preferences bar and instead of the single square icon, select the adjacent one (Add to selection). Also, tick "Contiguous".
- Click on any shadow areas that were missed.
- To soften the edges of the selection, on the menu bar click Select — Feather In the Feather Selection dialogue box, set the feather radius to 1 pixel. Click OK.
- To save this selection, on the menu bar click Select — Save Selection In the Save Selection dialogue box, type "Shadows" in the Name: box. Click OK.

Now we have the shadow areas saved as a selection and we can proceed to fill the layer masks.

Fill the layer masks

- On the Layers palette, turn off all the "eye" icons except the one for the "Darken" layer.
- Alt-click on the layer mask thumbnail for the "Darken" layer. This shows the layer mask in the image area. Initially it is completely white.
- On the menu bar click Select — Load selection In the Load Selection dialogue box, the "Selection:" should be Shadows and Invert should not be selected. Click OK. This puts the Shadows selection on the layer mask. Now we fill the selection with black.
- On the menu bar, click Edit — Fill Selection In the Fill Layer dialogue box, choose Black for the "Use:" box. Leave the mode at Normal and the Opacity at 100%. Click OK. This creates a mask over the shadow areas because we do not want to darken them. To see the effect:
- Alt-click the layer mask icon to hide the mask itself (but not its effects). Press Ctrl-D on the keyboard to remove the selection. Then, open all the "eye" icons on the Layers palette except the eye for the "Darken" layer.
- Now turn on the eye for the "Darken" layer and see how only the bright areas are darkened.

Use exactly the same instructions for the "Brighten" layer mask, except in the Load Selection dialogue box where Invert must be selected. This means that the selection will be everything except the shadow areas.

Save the result

Use Save to save the complete TIFF or PSD file with the layers intact. For printing and other uses, it is often convenient to have a JPEG file. This lacks layers, so choose Layers — Flatten from the menu bar before using Save As ... to save the modified image as a JPEG file.