How to quickly enhance a photo

This guide covers the following topics:

- Using Smart Fix and the auto enhance commands to apply auto adjustments to color, contrast, lighting, and sharpness.
- Fixing Red Eye.
- Using the Quick Selection tool to make changes to image selections.

Using Quick Fix

You can use several methods to enhance the images you bring into Adobe Photoshop Elements, but if you prefer to let Photoshop Elements do most of the work, you can probably find everything you need in Quick Fix.

In Quick Fix, you can make auto adjustments to color, contrast, lighting, and sharpness. You can even remove unwanted red eye caused by flash photography.

For even faster results, you can let Photoshop Elements make all the decisions by applying a Smart Fix. Smart Fixes make automatic adjustments to lighting, color, and contrast with a single click. If you like the results, you can move on to editing another photo. If not, undo your changes and try applying other enhancements from the Enhance menu or the Lighting, Color, or Sharpen palettes.

To enhance an image with Smart Fix:

1. Open the image in the Editor and select Edit Quick from the Edit tab (Figure 1) to open Quick Fix.
   
   You can view the photo as it appears after applying fixes, or place the original beside the fixed image for a before-and-after view.

2. Open the View menu in the lower-left corner of the workspace and select Before & After - Horizontal (Figure 2).
The copies of the image appear side-by-side (Figure 3).

3. Choose Enhance > Auto Smart Fix. The After image is enhanced automatically (Figure 4).

If you like the result, you have finished editing. If not, adjust the amount of Smart Fix in the Quick Fix palette by dragging the slider.

Note: To restore the image to its original state, click the Reset button above the After image.

Figure 3 Before and After views

Figure 4 After view with Smart Fix applied
To apply automatic enhancement for brightness, contrast, color, and sharpness:

1. To adjust brightness, choose Enhance > Auto Levels.
   **Note:** You can also click the Auto button for Levels in the Lighting palette (Figure 5).

2. To adjust contrast, choose Enhance > Auto Contrast.
   **Note:** You can also click the Auto button for Contrast or use the sliders in the Lighting palette.

3. To adjust color, choose Enhance > Auto Color Correction.
   **Note:** You can also use the Auto button for Color or the sliders in the Color and Balance palettes (Figure 6).

4. To adjust sharpness, choose Enhance > Auto Sharpen.
   **Note:** You can also use the Auto button for Sharpen or the sliders in the Detail palette (Figure 7).

![Figure 5 Lighting palette](image)

![Figure 6 Color and Balance palettes](image)

![Figure 7 Sharpen palette](image)
Removing red eye

One of the most common photography problems is the red eye effect caused by a camera’s flash. This problem is even more common with digital cameras because the flash unit is so close to the lens. Removing red eye is extremely simple with Photoshop Elements.

To remove red eye:

1. Open an image that has red eye.
2. Select Full from the Edit tab to open the full toolbar.
3. Zoom in to the area that needs correction.
4. Select the Red Eye Removal tool in the Tools palette (Figure 8).
5. Drag to draw a selection border around the affected eye (Figure 9).
   The red eye is removed (Figure 10).
6. If necessary, repeat the process on the same or other eyes until you are happy with the results.
Using the Quick Selection tool

The Quick Selection tool lets you apply enhancements to limited parts of an image. Using the Quick Selection tool, you can select areas with similar colors by dragging the tool across the canvas.

1. Open the image to which you want to apply enhancements.
2. Click the Quick Selection tool (Figure 11).
3. Drag the pointer across the canvas over an area with consistent color.
   As you do, observe that all of the surrounding area of similar color is selected (Figure 12).
4. Apply a change in one of the Quick Fix palettes. For example, you could increase the midtone contrast.
   Observe that changes apply only to the selected area (Figure 13).