Photo Editing With Photoshop Elements

Photoshop Elements is a photo editing tool available on the computers in the library's PNG room. These are available for library patrons to use by appointment. The procedures covered in this class can also be accomplished using Pixlr online. For more information on that, see our Photo Editing With Pixlr handout: http://www.elmwoodparklibrary.org/sitemedia/documents/adults/Photo-Editing-With-Pixlr-EPPL.pdf

Get started by opening Photoshop Elements. Click on the Start button at the bottom left of the screen, then click on All Programs, and then click on Adobe Photoshop Elements 6.0. Click on Edit in Photoshop's startup screen to go to the editor. Click on File, then on Open and open the first practice image. Your image opens in the center of the screen. There are toolbars and menus to the left, right, and above the image. The menus above the image allow you to save, open, print, resize, crop, add filters, and more. On the right, there are several effects available and the layers menu. Layers will be covered at the end of this class.

The toolbar on the left includes many additional editing tools. Hover over each tool to see what it is called. If you see an arrow in the bottom right corner of a tool, that means there are alternate versions of that tool. Hold down Alt and click on the tool to see alternate versions. Here is a summary of the tools we will use in this class:

Move Tool: Move an object on the canvas. Click and drag an object with this tool to move it.

Rectangular Marquee Tool: Select a rectangular area on the canvas. You can then apply filters and edits to the selected area, or move the selected area.

Magnetic Lasso Tool: Make a freeform selection. The magnetic lasso will grip onto parts of the image it detects as borders as you make your selection.

Clone Stamp Tool: Sample pixels from one part of an image and duplicate them elsewhere. This can be used to duplicate or remove an object or blemish.

Spot Healing Brush Tool: Remove imperfections by clicking on them. This tool uses nearby pixels to cover up the selected spot.

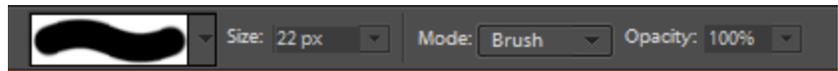*Eraser Tool*: Erase portions of an image from the canvas.

Layer masking

When someone says an image has been "Photoshopped," one of the editing procedures they are referring to is layer masking. Layer masking involves taking one image and fading it into a second image. In this example, we will fade a face into a background so that they appear as one image. A flat background or texture works best.
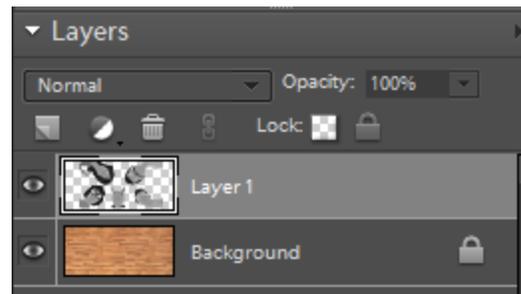

Once you have the images you want to use, click on File and then click on Open in Photoshop. Open the background image first. Next, open the image of the faces. These will appear as two separate windows in Photoshop. Select the window with the faces in it. You should see a small version of this image on the right in the Layers menu. Drag that layer onto the background image. Now the background image should have two layers in that layers menu and the image of the faces should sit right on top of the background.

Layers allow us to edit one image without touching the other image, even though they are on the same canvas. Use the eraser tool to erase the yellow background around the faces. You should see the background appear underneath the yellow as you erase it. You can change the size of the eraser at the top of the screen. Make the eraser smaller and zoom in to get the areas closest to the faces.

When you are satisfied that all the yellow background is gone, click on Enhance in the menu at the top of the screen, then click on Convert to Black and White. There are a handful of black and white options. Select one and click on OK.

Lastly, in the layers menu, change the mode to Overlay. Click on the dropdown that says Normal and select Overlay. The faces now blend into the background. You can use the move tool to position the image on the background.

Questions? Contact Adult Services at askref@elmwoodparklibrary.org or 708-395-1217.