

Layers

To change Background Layer to a normal layer, double-click its name in the layer palette.

To show/hide the layers palette, look in the Window menu or just press the F7 key on the keyboard.

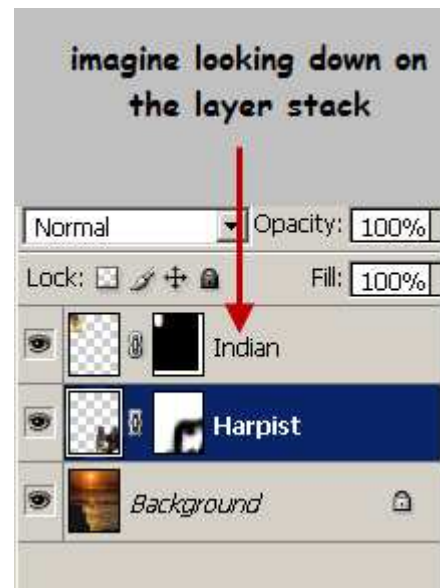
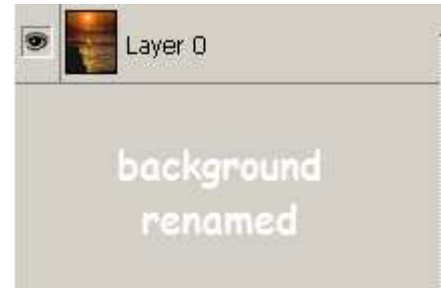
Looking down from the top of the Layers palette

The checkerboard pattern in the layer thumbnail shows transparent areas.

To turn a layer's visibility on or off, just click on the eyeball in the layer palette.

The extra thumbnails on the right of the Indian & Harpist layers are Layer Masks.

To turn a mask on or off, hold down the Shift key and click on its thumbnail.



Layer Masks

To add a layer mask to a layer, choose: Layer > Layer Mask. If you choose "Reveal All" you will see the current layer. "Hide All" hides the current layer.

You can also use the layer mask icon at the bottom of the layer palette. This will add a layer mask which will be "Reveal All".

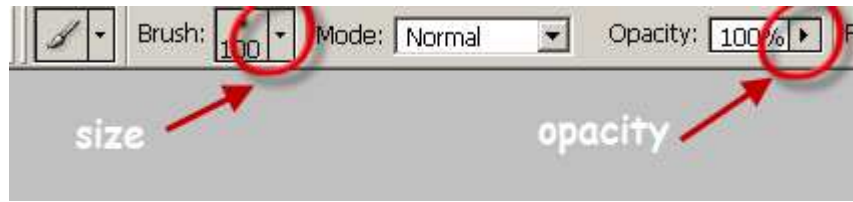
NB If you use an adjustment layer, it will have a layer mask automatically.

A layer mask filled with black will reveal the layer below. A layer mask filled with white will hide the contents of the layer below.



Painting on the layer mask:

Brush tool shortcut is B.



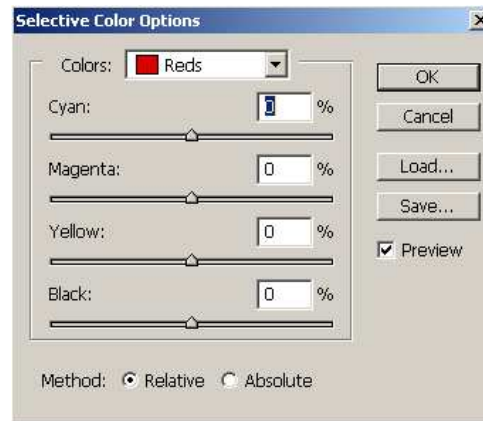
To reveal the layer below, paint of the layer mask with Black as the foreground colour. Reducing the opacity will make the layer mask partially transparent for a subtle effect.

Adjustment layers

The Selective Colour adjustment layer allows very subtle changes to the colour balance of an image – it is far more subtle than Hue & Saturation.

Make sure you set the “Method” to “Relative”.

Moving the Black slider gives a good idea of which areas will be affected by any changes to the C, M & Y values.



Black and White.

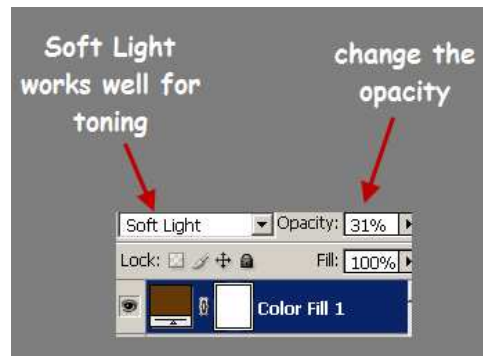
The latest versions of Photoshop have an excellent Black & White adjustment layer.

With earlier versions of Photoshop (not Elements, sadly!), Channel Mixer is recommended for monochrome conversion.

Toning images

Try using a Solid Colour adjustment layer for toning. R91, G56, B17 gives a nice sepia.

Change the blend mode to Soft Light or Colour and use the Opacity to fine-tune the toning.



If you use Photoshop Elements

Layer mask add-in:
<http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/pselements/qt/layermasktool.htm>