PHOTOSHOP: 2.1 BASIC PHOTO RETOUCH

Photoshop CC is such a powerful program with endless ways to retouch a photo, so it would not be impractical to introduce every retouch feature Photoshop has. However, there are some basic features that will be your go-to tools to retouching a photo.

When editing a photo, it is important that everything is done in the right order. This is not a concrete rule, but here is the suggested order of operations to retouching a photo on Adobe Photoshop CC.

1. Import Photo
2. Crop your photo
3. Exposure
4. White balance
5. Remove blemishes
6. Saturation
7. Sharpen and Noise Reduction
8. Black and White and filters
9. Resize
10. Save

1. Import Photo

First thing you need to do when retouching a photo on Photoshop is importing it into your program. To do that, just go to File > Open... and a window will open up for you to browse your computer and select a photo. You can also drag a photo from a window into Photoshop and it will import it.

2. Crop Photo

If you are sure you want to crop your photo to change the framing, it is a good place to start. However, it is not a problem if you prefer to hold it off. To crop a photo, use the crop tool located in the toolbox on the left side of the screen. It will display a box around the border of your photo, drag the corners and sides to cut parts of your image. Click and drag to adjust the positioning. For more about the crop tool, see the 1.1 INTERFACE AND TOOLS instructions.
3. **Exposure**

The next thing you want to adjust is the exposure of your image. The exposure is how bright or dark your photo is. To adjust this, there are several adjustment tools available. You can find these adjustments in a panel on the right side of your program. The following are the adjustments that affect exposure. Play with their properties to achieve the exposure you want.

- **Brightness and Contrast**
- **Levels**
- **Curves**
- **Exposure**

These adjustments are the first four layers located in the adjustments panel.

4. **White Balance**

White Balance refers to the accuracy of colors in a photo. When taking a photo, your camera is either set to Auto White Balance, a preset White Balance, or Custom White Balance. Sometimes, especially in indoor lighting, your photo may come out with a color cast on it, making the photo have a certain color tint to it.

In order to do this, you will need to use the Levels adjustment. Use the black eyedropper to identify the blackest part of the image, and the white eyedropper to identify the whitest part of the image. In some photos, this is obvious, but in most, it is difficult to find this. For a more precise White Balance adjustment, see the 2.4 WHITE BALANCE tutorial.

5. **Remove Blemishes**

Blemishes not only include blemishes in the form of skin imperfects on people, but also include camera dust, and any other small mark or flaw that spoils the appearance of the photo or an object.
To remove blemishes, use the Spot Healing brush, and tools in that category.

**Spot Healing Brush Tool:** This tool is used to remove spot blemishes. Use the Option Bar to adjust the size, the harness, and the spacing, and to choose from other options.

**Healing Brush Tool:** While the Spot Healing Brush samples the area around where you click, the Healing Brush Tool samples an area of your choice. After selecting this tool, hold “Alt/Option” on your keyboard and select the area that you want to sample, then let go of the key and select the spot you want to heal. This is similar to cloning an area.

**Patch Tool:** This tool is normally used to remove relatively large items in your photo from your image, like objects on the ground. Circle around the object, then drag it, it will then take from whatever is left or right of the image.

**Content Aware Move Tool:** This tool is used to move an object or a person in the photo elsewhere in the image. This tool is content aware meaning it will make it so that the move goes as unnoticed as possible. Draw around the object you want to move, leaving some space around it to make it easier on the program, and drag it to the new location. It will not only move the object to its new location, but make its old location look as natural as possible, Use the “structure” option in the Option Bar to specify how strict you want the tool to be with its blending.

**Red Eye:** This tool is used to fix red eyes often found in photos of people.

6. **Saturation and Color**

The next step is to adjust the saturation, color balance, and RGB levels in your photo to get what you are looking for. You can find the color adjustments in the adjustment panel. Each adjustment made is stored on a new layer, keeping the original pixels untouched. Use the properties panel to make modifications to the adjustment to get the look that you are going for. Here are the adjustments that affect color:

- **Vibrance**
- **Hue/Saturation**
- **Color Balance**
- **Channel Mixer**
7. **Sharpen and Noise Reduction**

The next step in the photo-editing process is sharpening photos. Sharpening makes the photo crisper. It is especially useful if your focus is a little off and you want details to be more visible in a photo.

Go to **Filter > Sharpen > Smart Sharpen**. A window will open where you can adjust the Amount, Radius, and Noise Reduction. You can do the same specifically to shadows and highlights as well.

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8. **Black & White, Style, and Filters**

Towards the end, after you have made your edits (or chosen no to), you can choose to add a filter or drastically change your photo.

In the Adjustments Panel, there are some adjustments that can drastically change the style of your image. Here are some options:

- **Black & White**
- **Invert**
- **Posterize**
- **Threshold**
- **Selective Color**
- **Gradient Map**

You can find other filters and effects to add to your photo by looking through the options under **Filter** in the Menu Bar.
9. Resize

Finally, you can change the size of your image for its purpose by going to **Image > Image Size**. To change the **Width** and **Height**, enter values in the box next to **Width** or **Height**. Select the Constrain Proportions option next to **Width** and **Height** to maintain the Width – Height ratio. To change the **Resolution**, enter a new value. To change the image size or resolution while allowing the total number of pixels to adjust proportionately, make sure that you select **Resample**. To change the image size or resolution **without** changing the total number of pixels, deselect **Resample**.

10. Save

To save your photo, go to **File > Save As**. A window will open up allowing you to choose where to save it, and in what format you want to save it. The default is set to save a Photoshop (.psd) file. If you are done editing and want to save it in a different format, drop down the Format option and select the format you want to save it as.

For each option, a window will open up with options to save it.