

Adobe Photoshop Elements 7 - PC

The king of photo editing?

by Stephen Patrick published on 3 November 2008

Adobe is the leading name in image editing, so any new release is of interest. However, this latest edition doesn't so much bring about a re-invention of the photo editing suite but starts to integrate features from Adobe's higher end products into their more mainstream offerings.

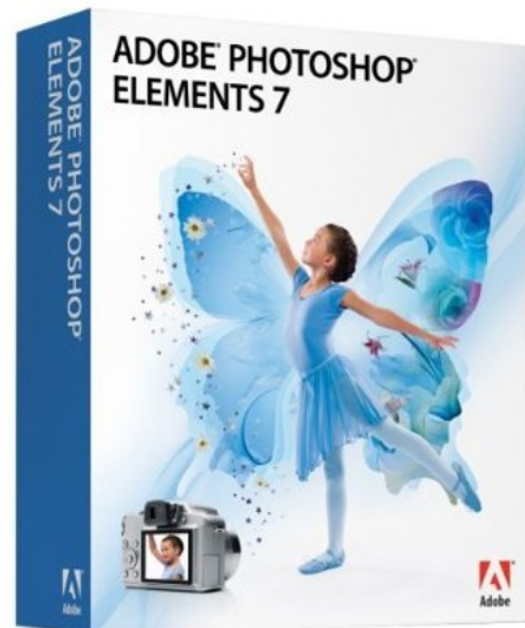
When you load up the software you'll be asked what you want to do. You can choose from Edit, Create and Share. The first two are self-explanatory while Share allows you to send edited images either as an email attachment or to online galleries. In many ways, this is the new focus of Elements, adding more online functionality.

As we've come to expect from editing suites, the tools are aimed at different levels of user. So, with Elements, we get Full Edit, Guided Edit and Quick Fix, each one aimed at a different level of user. You can access each one through Tabs on the page but as they share a commonality of features, you'll find yourself being moved between sections, which can be frustrating at times.

Guided Edit is the basic introduction to the package. With plenty of text-based examples of how to use the suite, it'll soon have you getting to grips with the various editing techniques.

Quick Fix is the probably the suite most people will turn to when they simply want to crop and edit basic photos. Using sliders and preview panes, you can carry out all the basic tasks of cropping, colour balance and saturation at the click of a button.

One tool first seen in Photoshop that will definitely improve your images is the Smart Brush palette. This is a basic but powerful editor that allows you to add a whole raft of effects. Whether it's whitening teeth or sharpening blurred areas of an



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image, we found it an intuitive tool to use that can really make a difference to final photos. If you need even greater control then there is the Detail Smart Brush, which allows you to change the size of the brushes used.

You'll also find that Scene Cleaner, which allows you to get rid of unwanted elements from photos, has been added to the Photomerge tools. Photomerge itself is an excellent tool that allows you to take elements from a variety of different photos and to "merge" them together. Integrated from Photoshop, it's a slick tool that adds a great deal of power to Elements that we haven't really seen before.

Full Edit is as close as you'll get at this price to Photoshop level of detail and comes with a vast array of filters and advanced editing tools. More experienced users will like the addition of FTP Settings, which allows you to take images and upload them directly to your own site.

VERDICT

At £80 this isn't the cheapest editing suite on the market and while there are a wide array of tools aimed at the basic user, Adobe Photoshop Elements 7 only really comes in to its own if you're serious about getting the most from your photos.

At a glance

What is it?

Photo editing software

Good

Three levels of experience, new PhotoShop-like features, powerful editing

Bad

Steep learning curve, interface awkward at times

Verdict

Now with added Photoshop features this is the best version yet but unless you really need the new tools, it's an expensive package

Price £80

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10