PHOTOSHOP USER INTERFACE
The Editing Interface, Menus, Tools, Options, etc.

PHOTOSHOP INTERFACE - OVERVIEW

This guide provides an overview of the various elements in the Photoshop Interface, including the Document Window, the Toolbar, the Options Bar, the Menu Bar, the Panels, and so forth. This guide does not cover details on using the Tools.

INTERFACE ELEMENTS

The default Photoshop User Interface: the Document Window (with image), the Toolbar on the left, the Options Bar and Menu Bar across the top, and the Panel Area on the right.
The elements found in the Photoshop interface are: 1) the Document Window – where images are displayed and edited, 2) the Toolbar and the Options Bar – where editing actions are selected and defined, 3) the Menu Bar – where options and commands related to files, image editing, selections, layers, etc. are chosen, and 4) the Panel Area - where the many panels that Photoshop gives us to work with are located.

**The Document Window**
The Document window is the large area in the center of the interface where the image is displayed and edited. The area where the image is visible is known as the canvas. The dark area surrounding the image is the pasteboard, which fills in the space around the image when the image displayed does not fill the entire Document window:

*The Document window displays the image.*

**The Document Tab**
The Document tab displays the document name, zoom level, mode, and bit depth.
At the top of the Document window is the **Document tab** which displays the **name** of the document ("INTRO_0001.psd"), its current **zoom level** (31.2%), **mode** (RGB) and **bit depth** (8).

**The Zoom Level and Status Bar**
The bottom left of the Document window displays the current **zoom level**. To the right of the zoom level is the **Status Bar**. By default, the Status Bar displays the **color profile** and **bit depth** of the image. In the illustration below the **Document Dimensions** option has been chosen.

Click and hold on the Status Bar to view additional information about the image (Width and Height, Resolution, and color Channels information). Click the **arrow icon** on the right to access the Status Bar options menu, where you can choose to view different details, such as Document Size (the file size), Dimensions (the width, height, and resolution), and so forth.

![The Status Bar options menu, where you can choose to view different information.](image)

**The Toolbar**  *(see also PDF titled TOOLBAR)*
The **Toolbar** (also known as the **Toolbox** or the **Tools Panel**) is where Photoshop provides access to all the tools for editing and retouching images, for painting, adding type or shapes to your document, and more.

By default, the Toolbar appears as a long, single column of tools on the left of Photoshop's interface (it can be moved, if preferred). Clicking the **double-arrows** at the top will reconfigure the Toolbar into a shorter, double column. Click the arrows again to return to the single-column layout:
The Toolbar can be viewed as a single (default) or double column.
**The Toolbar's Hidden Tools**
Many of the tools in the Toolbar have other tools nested below them in the same spot. Click and hold on a tool's icon to view a menu of the other tools hiding behind it.

For example, by default, the **Rectangular Marquee Tool** is shown (the second tool from the top). Click and hold on the Rectangular Marquee Tool's icon to display a menu that allows the **Elliptical Marquee Tool**, the **Single Row Marquee Tool** and the **Single Column Marquee Tool** to be selected from that same spot.

![Image showing Toolbar with hidden tools highlighted]

*Many of the spots in the Toolbar hold several nested tools.*

**The Tool Options Bar**
Located just above the document window is the **Options Bar** which displays available options for the tool that is currently active (selected) in the Toolbar. With the Rectangular Marquee Tool selected, the Options Bar shows options for the Rectangular Marquee Tool. Changing to a different tool automatically updates the Options Bar.

![Image showing Options Bar with Rectangular Marquee Tool options]

*Options for the active tool appear in the Options Bar.*

**The Menu Bar**
The **Menu Bar**, along the top of Photoshop's interface, provides various options and commands that are grouped into categories. The **File** menu, for example, contains options for opening, saving, and closing documents. The **Layer** menu lists options for working with layers. Photoshop's many filters are found under the **Filter** menu, and so on.
The Panels  (see also PDF titled PANELS)

Photoshop's panels, on the right by default, provide access to commands and options for a variety of different tasks. Panels are available for a variety of categories, such as Layers, Colors, and so forth.

The panels are in a column along the right of Photoshop.
Panel Groups
To save space on the screen, Adobe provides the means to group related panels together. Just like the Document window, each panel has a tab at the top which displays the panel’s name. For example, the Layers panel is selected in the first screenshot below. To the right of the Layers tab are two others - Channels and Paths - which are nested in the same panel group. The name of the panel that is currently open in the group (in this case, the Layers panel) appears brighter than the others. To switch to a different panel in a group, click on its tab.

The Layers panel, the Channels panel, and the Path panel grouped, with Layers active.

Clicking on the Channels panel makes it the active panel, and the Layers panel inactive.

Where To Find More Panels In Photoshop
The complete list of available panels can be found under the Window menu, in the Menu Bar.

The Window Menu
The Window menu, which lists all available panels, is accessed by selecting the Window category from the Menu Bar.

Selecting the Window category in the Menu Bar.

The list of available panels is displayed as a long, single column. (The screenshot below shows the column split in half to help it fit better on the page.) To select a panel, click on its name in the list. A checkmark to the left of a panel’s name means that the panel is already open. Selecting a panel that is already open will close it.
All of Photoshop's panels can be accessed from the Window menu.

**The Search Tool**

Use the **Search Tool** to quickly find tools or commands in Photoshop, tutorials on many topics, and/or images from Adobe Stock. To use the Search feature, click on the **Search icon** (the magnifying glass) in the upper right of Photoshop.

![Search tool](image)

*Clicking the Search Tool icon.*

Enter your search term (example, "Crop"). The Search bar then expands to show you the results along with a menu allowing you to limit the type of results. By default, **All** is selected. To limit the results to just Photoshop tools, panels, and commands, choose **Photoshop**. For tutorials on your search term, choose **Learn**. And to view only images from Adobe Stock, choose **Stock**: 
Use the Search feature to quickly find what you are looking for.

In this example the search for "Crop" found Photoshop's **Crop Tool**, the **Crop and Straighten Photos** command, the **Trim** command, the **Perspective Crop Tool**, and the **Crop** command. Click on any tool or command in the list to select it. Below the tools and commands is a tutorial from Adobe on how to crop and straighten photos, as well as images related to "Crop" on Adobe Stock. Clicking on a tutorial or an image will launch your web browser and take you to the Adobe tutorial website or Adobe Stock website.

**Workspaces**

A **workspace** is a preset collection and arrangement of Photoshop interface elements. Workspaces define which panels are displayed on the screen, how those panels are arranged, the layout of the tools in the Toolbar, items in the Menu Bar, keyboard shortcuts, and so forth. Switch to a different workspace using the **Workspace** options menu, is represented by an icon in the upper right of Photoshop.
The Workspace Options Menu.

Click on the icon to open a list of available workspaces. Photoshop includes several built-in workspaces. Each one customizes the interface for a specific type of work. Additional details about creating and saving custom workspaces can be found in the documentation provided with Session 1 of the INTRODUCTION TO PHOTOSHOP series.