HINTS, TIPS AND QUICK FIXES IN PHOTOSHOP
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This hand out has been designed to be gone through from start to finish rather than being dipped into, as it follows a fairly logical progression.

Most digital photographers edit their photos before printing. This can vary from just cropping, resizing and minor adjustments to the other extreme where surreal images using involve commercial plug-ins and add-ons are created.

Most editing, however amazing the results, works by altering the colour of individual pixels. Sometimes the effect is obvious eg darkening, lightening or decolourising, HDR. Sometimes it's not such an obvious colour change eg blur is created when pixels adjacent to each other are given similar colours, sharpening an image is achieved by the opposite effect, adjacent pixels are coloured the same to define an outline more clearly.

Most effects can be created by numerous different techniques – it is a matter of finding the most suitable ones for a particular job and then choosing a favourite.

TABLET/PEN is useful instead of a mouse because much finer control is possible when making adjustments with brush or selection tools.

The screen on the Tablet corresponds to the screen (even if it isn't the same proportions) and the pen can be set so that its position on the Tablet screen exactly corresponds to the computer screen rather than scrolling. Getting used to it can take a while.

One feature of the Tablet is that some Photoshop applications are sensitive to the pressure applied to the pen - if the icon on the Options Bar with the concentric circles and pen is on, increasing the pressure of the pen on the tablet pressure increases the size of the brush. A hatched circle and pen on the Options Bar allows the pressure to control the opacity of the brush.

The Express keys on the Tablet can be set to do tasks that are used frequently such as Zoom or keyboard strokes.

It may be useful to have the mouse at hand because some functions eg right clicking are easier with the mouse.

THE SCREEN

The screen appearance and arrangement of the documents can be customised by **Edit>Preferences>Interface**

Regardless of how documents are displayed, **pressing F** will scroll progressively through the current appearance, Full screen mode with menu bar and Full screen mode.

If there are several documents open **Hold CTRL and tap TAB** to cycle through them.

To fill the screen with the image, hold down **Ctrl and 0**
To zoom out and see the edges, hold down **Ctrl and -**
To zoom into the document, hold down **Ctrl and =**

This method keeps the centre of the picture in the centre of the document and to move to a particular part of the image you need use the **Hand Tool** towards the bottom of the Tool Bar *OR* hold down the Space Bar and most tools become the Hand Tool.

Click on the portion you want to zoom into with the **Zoom Tool** (magnifying glass just below the Hand tool) until it is at the magnification required.

Zooming in or out changes the magnification in fixed amounts but if the Scrubby Zoom on the Tool Bar is ticked, moving the cursor one way will zoom in and moving in the opposite direction will zoom out. With **Scrubby Zoom unticked**, draw a shape with the Zoom Tool to select exactly the part you want.

The **Zoom Scale Box** shows the current Zoom level at the bottom left of the document.
At 100% you see exactly what will be printed - at lower zoom levels information can be missing on the screen, particularly narrow straight lines and small text.

Holding down **Ctrl and Alt and tap 0** gives 100% on the Zoom Scale Box.

Sometimes it is necessary to zoom into an image very closely when carrying out some edits and then you need to zoom out frequently to monitor the total effect. You can display another **viewing image** which stays on the screen so you can see what is happening overall when working on a small area. Open image, **Windows>Arrange>click on New Window** at the bottom of the menu. When finished just close the viewing image and save the other.

PALETTES
Windows>Tick your choices displays your chosen palettes on the screen.

Palettes often open connected to one or more associated palettes eg Layers with Paths and Channels, History with Actions. Each can be separated by just pulling the tab away or assigned to another group by pulling the tab to the row of tabs on the group.

The **fly out menus**, accessed by clicking on the icon at the top right of the palette (lines and triangle), give shortcuts and extra options. They can all be accessed via other menus or key strokes but can be time savers.

<u>**Navigator palette**</u> **- Windows> Navigator** is a useful Palette for making a methodical sweep through an image before you finally decide it is finished. The slider on the Navigator palette is used to choose a frame size to check the image.

<u>**Layers palette**</u>
First appeared in Version 3 in 1994.

When an image is opened it appears on the Layers palette as Background with a padlock which means that editing is limited.

To enable the full range of options, unlock the Background :- **Layer > New >Background from Layer group** *OR* **Hold Alt and Double Click on thumbnail** *OR* **Double click on label>OK** *OR* **Right Click on thumbnail label>Choose**

Make Layer from Background *OR* **move the padlock to the bin at the bottom of the palette.**
The Background layer is now labelled as Layer 0. It can be by double clicking the label and typing the new name.

It is useful to make one or more duplicate layers of an image when it is first opened **Layer>Duplicate** *OR* **drag the layer down to the New Page icon at the bottom of the Layers palette.** If it suddenly disappears, it will have been put in the Bin by mistake, so just go the History palette (next section) and go up one stage.

The duplicate layers can be made invisible by **clicking on the eye** on the appropriate layer so they cannot be edited in error. If necessary the working layer can be dragged to the Trash bin and a duplicate layer made visible for further editing.

To be even safer, a **duplicate copy** can be made **Image>Duplicate**, to be used as the working document, keeping the original safe and sound.

History Palette
The History palette (multiple UNDOs and REDOs) appeared in Adobe 5 version in 1998. It replaced **Edit>Undo** *OR* **Ctrl and Z** which remains functional.

The default is 20 history states –a larger number can be chosen but it uses large amount of RAM.

You can save a particular stage and go back to it at any time* by making a **Snapshot** which it saves that particular stage of the edit and you can go back to it – **click on the little camera at the bottom of the History palette**. The process can be repeated at any stage during the editing - it can be useful to label the Snapshots by **Double Click on the name and type in new name.**
* Snapshots are just a temporary holds - they are not saved when the image is saved.

A permanent method of saving a particular stage in the editing is to click on the **Duplicate New Document from the Current State icon** at the bottom of

the History Palette (little New Document icon with +) which will create a new document at that history state.

TOOL BAR
Each tool on the Tool Bar has its own symbol.
If the cursor becomes a cross, it usually means the Caps lock on.

Many tools have others associated with them, identified with the little triangle on the tool icon – keeping the cursor on the icon reveals the alternatives.

Each tool has several choices on the **Options bar**.

CLONE TOOL (sometimes known as the Rubber Stamp Tool)
One of the oldest tools in Photoshop. It does have limitations and several alternatives have been added to the programme with successive versions.

Content Aware Fill
Make a rough selection around the area to be removed with the Polygonal Lasso Tool (If you hold down Alt it becomes the Lasso tool and you can draw around shapes).
Edit>Fill>Content Aware>OK.

It can be dramatic when it works but it needs a reasonable surrounding area to be sampled for replacement but it's worth a try because the result, even if not satisfactory may facilitate further editing.

Healing Tools found above the Brush tool
These are variations on the Clone Tool and make adjustments for the pixels being replaced and so produce a much smoother effect than Cloning.

The **Spot Healing Brush** is best for very small areas or narrow lines.
Choose a brush size which corresponds to the area to be cloned either in the Brush drop down menu on the Options Bar *OR* more easily, by tapping the Square Bracket keys.

Cover the area to be removed, in one operation. If the spot is not completely removed, repeat the procedure.

To remove a straight line with the Spot Healing brush, make sure the Pressure sensitive icon is not chosen if a Tablet and Pen are being used, click on one end of the area, hold down Shift and click on other end.
This method can be used with several tools which use brushes eg Pencil, eraser, brush.

The **Content Aware tool** moves a portion of an image to another part of the picture. Make a loose selection with the tool or the Lasso tool, and then use the Content Aware tool to move the selection to a new position. The move has to be made within the same background to work well.

The **Patch Tool** is useful to cloning both small and large areas.
Make a fairly tight selection with the Patch Tool around the area to be removed and then use it to move around the image for a suitable clone.

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When the **Clone Tool** is appropriate the problem is that unless it's still on your History palette or you've made a Snapshot it's permanent.

However it can be used in a non-destructive and infinitely variable way.

Non-destructive cloning is done on a new (transparent) layer above the layer to be worked on. **Click on the New Layer icon** _OR_ **Layer> New Layer>Layer.**

Because it is a separate layer the working layer is unaffected.   Also parts of it can be erased if necessary. In addition the cloned layers opacity can be reduced by **altering the figure on the Opacity box** _OR_ use a **Scrubby Slider** (position the cursor on the word Opacity and move it from right to left – most numerical edits can be altered in this way).

Highlight the New Layer and make sure that Sample on the Options Bar is set to Current and Below _OR_ All Layers, so although the transparent layer is the working layer, sampling is from the image layer below.

To avoid hard edges to the cloned area it is best to use a soft brush although cloning cleanly around sharp edges then becomes very difficult.

As the cloned area is on a separate layer its opacity can be reduced to expose the working layer underneath and the overlapping areas of the cloned area can be removed with the Eraser.

An alternative method to maintain a sharp edge on the working layer is to select the edge with enough of the image and make it into a separate layer **Layer>Layer via Copy** *OR* **Ctrl and J,** move it above the transparent layer with the cursor (doesn't matter which tool you are using), make it invisible while cloning and then restore its visibility when cloning is complete, to cover any spill over of the cloned area onto the original image.

When you are satisfied, flatten the image **Layer>Flatten image.**

Most photographers use the **IMAGE>ADJUSTMENTS** menu.
The most common edits are **Brightness and Contrast, Levels, Curves, Hue and Saturation, and Vibrance** and are straightforward to use.

However the changes are **irreversible** once the edit has gone off the History palette.   Also if several edits are made one after another they are unalterable unless you go back in the History panel with the loss of all the subsequent edits. The way round both these problems is to use **Adjustment Layers** which work within the Layer palette.

Click on the Adjustment Layer icon (half black half white circle at the bottom of the Layers palette) and open up and work on one application at a time in the same way as using Image>Adjustment menu. There is no OK, clicking on the x at the top of the panel will close it. Or it can be left on the screen for future alterations. Open as many Adjustment Layers as necessary.

If the effects on any adjustment layer need further editing **double click on the left hand icon (the image)** and make the alterations or **to go back to the original, click on the little curved arrow on the bottom of the panel.**

The right hand icon, the white rectangle denotes the **Adjustment Layer**. A surrounding broken line indicates whether it or the image itself is active.

An Adjustment layer is one of numerous applications of a **MASK**.

A Mask can be imagined as a transparent layer sitting on the image but attached to it.

For any work to be done on the Adjustment Layer it must be active it has lines around the corners of the icon. To make it active click on its icon and the colours on the Tool Bar will change to Black foreground and White background. The brush tool can then be used to remove the adjustment on part of the image.   Painting over with white will restore the adjustment.
The easiest way to flip the foreground colours from black to white is to use the X key.

Therefore black protects the original from the change and white removes the protection.

If only a small area is to be altered, make the adjustment as before, fill the Adjustment layer with black, with the **bucket tool** *OR* **Ctrl and I** so that the whole image is now protected from editing and the change will appear to disappear.   Any part of the image painted with white will reveal the change.

It is a useful way to brighten a face in shadow - Use a **Levels Adjustment Layer** to brighten up the face, just concentrating on the face, then fill the Adjustment Layer with black and with a large very soft brush to restore the Levels effect over the face with white. The degree of the restoration can be lessened by reducing the opacity of the brush and building up the effect *OR* using 100% opacity brush and reducing the opacity of the adjustment layer.

If the area needs further tweaking it can be made into a **Selection** because Masks and Selections are interchangeable – hold **down Ctrl and click on the Adjustment Layer Mask thumbnail** (making sure it is active with the lines at the corners) *OR* **Select>Load Selection>OK** *OR* **click on the Adjustment Layer** to bring up the panel and click on the little dotted circle and the adjusted area will become a selection ie the white area. A further adjustment layer will only affect the selected area.

To select the part protected from the changes, invert the selection by **holding down Shift and Ctrl and I** *OR* **Select>Inverse.**
If the menu route is used, tick the Invert box in the Load Section menu.

Masks are useful for all sorts of edits –

<u>**Quick Mask**</u> allows you to select an area with a brush. **Click on the Quick Mask icon** at the bottom of the Tool Bar (rectangle with dotted circle), *OR Select>Edit in Quick Mask Mode* and the colours on the Tool Bar change to black foreground and white background. Paint with black choosing an appropriate size and hardness and the painted area appears transparent red. **Click again on the Quick Mask icon** -turns the mask into a **selection** which can be edited eg change its colour, **BUT** the red protects so need to invert the selection as above to leave just that bit unprotected **then deselect by Ctrl and D** *OR* **Select>Deselect.**

The red colour of the mask is the Photoshop default for masking - it is a 50% opacity which may be too opaque or red may be an unsuitable colour, particularly if your image is red.   It can be changed to any colour and opacity by double clicking on the Quick Mask icon which brings up the menu to make the changes. You can also choose to mask the painted areas, which may be easier because you are painting around you chosen area rather than covering it. **NB** Do not try to make the mask less opaque by reducing the opacity of the brush because all that will do will be to make a less opaque mask and thus a ghostly selection because painting will be with grey not black.

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Quick mask is also useful to make a **graded adjustment**

Click on **Quick Mask icon**, pick the **Gradient Tool** from the Tool Bar (with Bucket, and use the **Linear Gradient** on the Options Bar (icon on the left). Take the cursor across the image. Click on **Quick Mask** to exit and the red mask becomes a selection which then can be adjusted and because it is a gradient there will be no sharp edge.

The gradient can be started and finished at any position on the image or be it on a slant.

Other effects can be produced by other Gradients on the Options Bar.

Clipping masks enable an image to be displayed under a shape or text. Open a transparent New Document and draw the shape or text in **black** that is to be filled with an image, bring in an image **from another document** and make it a clipping mask by **right clicking on the label and choose Create Clipping Mask**. The image will be framed but can be moved and both layers can be **edited**.

As with any masks the changes are not permanent so you can go back and re-edit sections.

The **Layer Mask** is an efficient method of choice for selecting part of an image. Click on the **Layer Mask icon** (the circle in a rectangle at the bottom of the Layers palette) and the Layer Mask thumbnail appears by the image thumbnail. Paint away unwanted areas, correcting with white.

Double click on the Layer Mask thumbnail (which allows some editing of the mask with the sliders) and then either apply the mask by clicking on the icon with a diamond and arrow which completes the process, *or* leave the Layer Mask active for future editing if necessary. Another way to apply the Layer Mask is to Right Click on the Layer Mask icon and click on Apply Layer Mask.

NB Work can be done on the Layer Mask or the image itself but make sure that the correct thumbnail is activated by clicking on it – it will have a broken line around it.

If the Layer Mask is applied before editing is complete, another Layer Mask can be added but it will not be possible to get retrieve any areas from the previous Layer Mask operation.

The Layer Mask can be made into a selection after it is applied by right clicking the image thumbnail and clicking Select Pixels. The selection can be modified if necessary – eg contract **Select>Modify>Contract>OK. Ctrl and D** *OR* **Select>Deselect** will convert the selection into a layer. **Edit >Transform** *OR* **Ctrl and T** enables several different effects by pulling on the handles – holding Shift and pulling on the corners will retain scale, while holding down Ctrl allows the layer to be distorted.

BLENDING which is one of the most useful features of Photoshop.

The menu is found on the **Layers palette**, defaults as Normal which has no blending.

Clicking the arrow next to Normal will display a drop down menu with a long list of modes to choose from.

To use this list it is necessary to have at least 2 layers and the layer highlighted has to be active ie visibility eye switched on.

Photoshop looks at the pixels on two adjacent layers and the Blending Mode chosen will determine which pixels show through.
The list of Blending Modes is divided into 6 groups.
The group headed by **Darken** pick out and displays the darker values in each layer.
The **Lighten** group picks out and displays the lighter pixels in each layer.
The **Overlay** group pick up both dark and light pixels from each layer and does some complicated multiplication with their colour values.
The **lower groups** relate to other aspects of colour and may only select form one layer and the result may be determined by the layer order.

Although blending it is very useful for particular jobs, it is worth experimenting to see the effects.

One of the main features is that the **edits are non-destructive** and the effects can be altered and returned to as long as the image is saved as a PSD or TIFF which are the files which support layers.

Examples of blending applications

Replacing bland skies with a more interesting one can be done in many different ways, including the use of blending modes. The method below is useful for foregrounds with complicated or wispy edges such as trees:-
Import a good sky onto the image with the bland sky. Blend with **Multiply** from the Darken Blend group which is picking out the dark pixels from each layer. Add a Layer Mask to the top sky layer and using a black brush paint away the unwanted sky. For large tree trunks and branches zoom in and use a small brush. For the feathery branches use a soft brush with low opacity of about 10% and use multiple strokes to dot away the colour where

necessary. Where the smallest branches are silhouettes they can be left untouched.
Because it is a Layer Mask, any corrections can be made with white

This is a good method for strong images such as bare tree branches and also for wispy hair. It is worth trying different blending modes in the Darken group as different contrasts need different approaches.
NB It is essential to have the light sky as white as possible because the Darken blends picks out the darker pixels from each layer. If there is colour in the lighter sky that will show.

Correcting an overexposed image
Duplicate the layer and choose **Multiply.**
Adjust opacity of top layer if necessary.

Correcting an underexposed image
Duplicate the layer and blend with **Screen**

Colour popping
Create new layer on top of dull image.
Image → Apply Image → Merged → OK
Blend with **Overlay** (or other blend in the Contrast section) and reduce opacity if required.

Creating a border
Open image to be framed. This method uses black and white layers which will be painted away – it is important not to confuse them with Masks.

Make **New Layer** and fill with **black**. **This will obscure the image**. Set **Screen** Blend which will reveal the image again because the Screen blend group chooses the **light pixels**, so will ignore the black layer. Painting the black layer with white, in Screen blend will choose those pixels and will appear on top of the image. Choose suitable brush to make a border. Corrections can be made by painting over with black which Screen blend will ignore.

If the new layer is filled with **white** and blended with **Multiply**, a black border can be painted on because the Darken modes choose darker pixels in each layer.

It isn't restricted only to black and white –
If new layer is filled with a colour and blended with Multiply, it will create a transparent effect because although the Multiply blend is picking out dark pixels in each layer, only black will obscure totally.

Filling the new layer with 50% grey, the image will appear to have been washed with white.
Blending in **Screen** and painting the **middle of the image in black** will give a washed out border.
Blending in **Multiply** darkens the whole image and painting the **middle of the image in white** will give a dark border.

Sometimes it can be difficult to get a satisfactory border with a brush.
There are borders to download but it is possible to make your own eg with a scan of white paper with torn edges on a black background.
Invert by **Ctrl and I** so it becomes black on white and move it onto the document to be framed - on top of image, scaling to size if necessary. Blend in **Screen** to pick out the light pixels from each layer.

<u>Sharpening</u>

Sharpening can be achieved in many different ways – this is a method which uses blending with and so is non-destructive and variable and a Filter. Make a **duplicate image** and **Filter>Other>High Pass.** At its lowest radius value it is a 50% grey and no effect can be seen on the Preview. Increasing the radius brings up the edges of the image. Blend with **Overlay.** The amount of sharpening can be adjusted by altering the radius value, using Soft Light instead of Overlay and reducing the opacity of the High Pass layer before merging the two layers.

<u>Luminosity Mask </u>to boost colour in a flat image
Open the Channels palette, Crtl and RGB layer. This picks out the pixels which are white, ignores the black pixels and partially selects pixels in between according to their lightness. **Layers>Ctrl and J** to copy onto a new layer and open the Layers Palette – selected pixels will be labelled Layer 1. Blend with **Overlay** (or Soft Light if better) for boost in colour.

<u>Luminosity mask</u> to lighten dark shadows in a contrasty image.
Open **Channels, Ctrl and RGB layer**.
As the light pixels have been selected and it is the dark ones which need to be lightened to lighten the dark ones, invert the selection **Select>Inverse** and use the appropriate Adjustments to edit.

Some quick fixes

<u>Restoring faded photos</u>
Adjustments>Levels>click on grey dropper then click on area which should be a mid-tone grey. Adjust with Levels, Vibrance as required.

<u>Straighten buildings</u>
Make sure the image is a layer and transform it **Ctrl and T** *OR* **Edit>Transform>Scale)**.
Zoom out so that you can see the edges **Ctrl and -** and the bounding box.

Holding down Shift and pulling out or in on the corners will alter the size but keep the scale.
Holding down Ctrl enables distortion - pull the corners to bring verticals parallel to the edges of the image and use the handles in the middle of the sides to keep the proportions correct.

When working with several layers, make sure the correct one is highlighted. Sometimes the wrong one may be highlighted unexpectedly – it seems to depend on what you have done or undone during editing.

In most working panels from the drop down menus, pressing Alt changes Cancel to Reset so if the adjustments were not right they can be reset rather than closing and reopening the application.

The marching ants can be in the way when editing a selection – you can hide them by **Ctrl and H** BUT DO NOT FORGET THEY ARE STILL THERE AND THE SELECTION IS STILL ACTIVE ! Bring them back by **Ctrl and H** and/or deselect as **Ctrl and D** *OR* **Select>Deselect.**

If a selection is to be edited, it can be made into a **separate layer** for editing without affecting the original image and then the layers can be flattened.

To transfer one document precisely onto the centre of another, click on the image to be moved, hold down Shift and move it across to the new document.