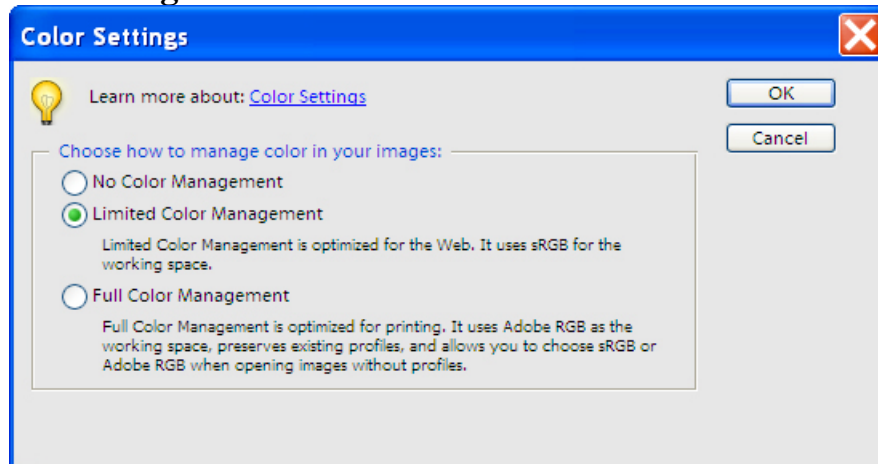


Preparing images for the ZAPP digital jury system with Photoshop Elements 3.0

Larry Berman and Chris Maher - 06/08/05

1 - Set color settings



To convert any image to the sRGB color space in Elements, first open the color settings dialogue box under **Edit>Color Settings** and choose **Limited Color Management** which uses **sRGB** as the working color space. Then open an image and save it under a new making sure the “**ICC Profile: sRGB**” box is checked. That converts the new image to the sRGB color space, which is used by ZAPP and read by your browser.

2 - Set Preferences

By default Elements installs with inches as the default unit of measurement. If you change it to pixels, it will make resizing your images easier to understand. Inches are only necessary if you're outputting to print. All uses that we're interested in are based on pixel dimensions.

Edit>Preferences>Units and Rulers>change Rulers from Inches to Pixels. That will make it easier as your target size is 1920 pixels long dimension.

3 - Open your image

File>Open, or drag and drop from a folder view (Windows Explorer), thumbnail program like ACDSee or Photoshop's File Browser.

4 - Save to archive and for a working original

Immediately **Save As a PSD** (Photoshop file) or TIF so you can work uncompressed and not degrade digital camera image files by making changes and saving. If it's already an uncompressed TIF from a scan, save under a new name so as not to modify the original.

5 - If scanned crooked

Image>Rotate>Straighten Image

6 - Crop for best composition and impact

Draw (from top left to bottom right) with the Rectangular Marquee

Tool>Image>Crop

7 - Use Levels to control highlights, shadows and brightness

Enhance>Adjust Brightness/Contrast>Levels and check the right side (highlight) for a flat line. If flat, move slightly to where it starts to raise. Repeat on the left (shadow) side. Then adjust the mid point to brighten the midrange if needed. This can also be accomplished through the use of an adjustment layer under ***Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels***.

Tip – The advantage of using adjustment layers is that all modifications are saved in the master PSD file and can be edited again in the future.

8 - Adjust Saturation

Enhance>Adjust Color>Hue and Saturation

Pick color to control (or the entire image) to increase or decrease saturation, change hue, lighten or darken. It's much better to work on individual colors. This can also be accomplished through the use of an adjustment layer under ***Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation***.

9 – Brighten

At this point you might have to brighten the image slightly because increasing the saturation might have made some areas too dark.

Enhance>Adjust Brightness/Contrast>Brightness/Contrast. This can also be accomplished through the use of an adjustment layer under ***Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast***.

Tip – This is where I would use ***Curves*** instead of ***Brighten*** in full Photoshop. The Curves Tool is not available in Elements.

10 - Resize image view to 100% to check for flaws

This doesn't actually change the size of the image, just the view within the Photoshop work space.

I use the shortcut **CTRL+Space Bar** and click on the image to enlarge view. **Alt+Space Bar** and click to view smaller. **CTRL++** or **CTRL+-** does the same thing, or just **View>Zoom In** or **Zoom Out**. The Command key on the MAC is the equivalent of the Control key in Windows.

11 - Scroll the image looking for flaws or dust spots using the Hand Tool

12 - Clone Stamp Tool to fix flaws

Pick brush size after selecting the tool

ALT+Click for source and **Click** to clone

13 - Save As your uncompressed final full size master file

14 - Resize for the intended use like ZAPP

Image>Resize>Image Size and enter 72 for the resolution and 1920 as the long pixel dimensions. You've already changed your preferences to pixels so it will already have pixels per inch as the default in the image size dialogue.

15 - Add Black Canvas to make the image square

Select Black with the color picker and make sure it's set as the background color in the tool pallet.

Image>Resize>Canvas Size – make sure it has Pixels as the unit of measurement and you should already have 1920 set as the longer dimension. Enter 1920 for the other dimension to make the image square. Both dimensions should say pixels because you set that as a default in the beginning.

16- Save As a 1920 pixel PSD or TIF

I add 1920 to the file name so I don't get confused. Always save before adding sharpening

17 - Sharpen

Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask

Adjust according to the amount of detail in the image and always view at 100% when making sharpening decisions.

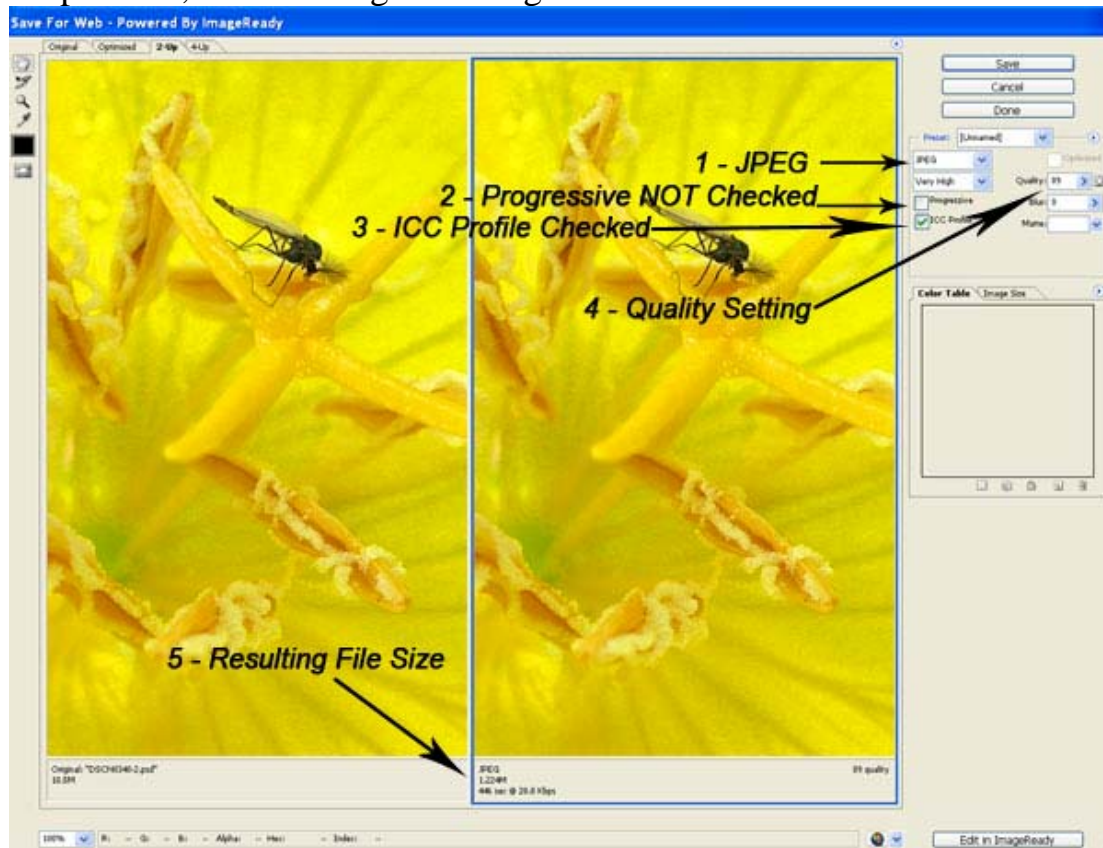
18 - Save as a JPEG (2 different ways are possible)

1 - *File>Save As>JPEG*

Choose your level of compression and make sure the box is checked for **ICC Profile: sRGB**. You will have the option to enter a compression level after clicking Save. The compression level you choose should be approximately 9 to 11 out of 12 and your desired target would get be to get you close to, but still less than 1.8 megabytes. I suggest adding the compression number to the file name during the Save so you can try multiple levels of compression and keep the one that matches your target file size.

2 - *File>Save For Web*

This is the method I use because the changes you make are seen real time. You will see a two picture interface showing the original on the left and the compressed JPEG on the right. Make sure JPG is the file type (GIF shows by default on installation) and Progressive is **NOT** checked and ICC Profile is checked. Changing the number in the quality box (between 1 and 100) changes the file size under the right hand picture. If the file size doesn't change, click on any gray area outside of the quality box to activate the real time preview, which changes the target file size.



In this screen capture from Photoshop, you can see the five most important points. 1- JPEG as the image file type. 2 – Progressive NOT checked. 3 – ICC color profile checked. 4 – Quality setting. 5 – Resulting file size.

Addendum for Elements 3.0

There are two new important tools in Elements 3.0, which was released in November 2004. The first is the Healing Brush Tool which looks like a Band-Aid on the left-hand tool bar. It's a smarter Cloning Tool. By default it installs as a Spot Healing Brush Tool which automatically takes texture from adjoining areas. The Healing Brush Tool (not spot) lets you choose the source by Alt+Clicking and then clicking the area where you want the information from the source texture to be placed. That gives you more control. The Healing Brush gives you a more natural blend than the Cloning Tool. The healing Brush is also good for cleaning up dust spots on a graduated background, on which most 3D people seem to use to have their work photographed.

The other important tool is the Shadow/Highlight Tool, under Enhance>Adjust Lighting>Shadow/Highlight. If you've attended one of my seminars, you've seen first hand how the S/H (Shadow/Highlight) Tool has helped open up dark areas of paintings and allows brush strokes to be seen. I've also shown examples of how it's separated 3D items from the dark parts of a graduated background. Used on a contrasty image, the Shadow slider opens the dark areas while the Highlight slider brings detail into the highlights. What's different from the S/H Tool first available in Photoshop CS is a midtone contrast adjustment slider in a visible location. This is an improvement because when using the S/H Tool in Photoshop I always needed to tweak the contrast afterwards and had to open up the "more options" menu to get to the midtone contrast adjustment. It's a major advantage to have all three, Shadow slider, Highlight slider and Midtone Contrast slider in one tool with a real time preview. If you move the shadow and highlight sliders all the way to the left, that will be the point at which no adjustment is made. Then slowly slide them to the right looking at the changes in the image. Use the preview check box to see the image with and without the changes to make a more educated decision on how much to use the tool.

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Larry Berman

PO Box 265, Russellton, PA 15076

412-767-8644 800-350-9289

e-mail: larry@bermanart.com

Chris Maher

PO Box 5, Lambertville, MI, 48144

734-856-8882 800-238-2597

e-mail: chris@chrismaher.com