

CS6

Everything you need to know about the new version

Photoshop CS6 is here! We guide you through the best new features and top tips for using it to the best of its ability



Photoshop CS6: As usual, both an Extended and Standard version of Photoshop is available, as well as a selection of Suite options, giving users an even greater range of options to choose from

Right: Turn to the dark side: The new interface embraces the black colouring of Lightroom and other Adobe programs, such as Premiere Pro. There are also additions to the Layers palette and a new Properties palette, among other cosmetic changes



Being Advanced Photoshop magazine, we can't help but get a little overexcited about a new instalment to the Creative Suite. So we couldn't wait to get our hands on CS6, and it appears Adobe was just as keen to let everyone else have a play too! The Beta was made publicly available a month before the official launch and plenty of sneak peeks were revealed even before that. It's an interesting move from Adobe, which has usually remained much more tight-lipped over Creative Suite releases.

Chances are, therefore, that you have seen the Photoshop CS6 interface, had a play and maybe even made a few discoveries for yourself. There has been a 62 per cent increase in features, with many inspired by user feedback. Over these 13 pages we will be taking an in-depth look at the new key tools and features in the program, as well as looking at how to use them to the best of their abilities.

The interface

The most noticeable differences to Photoshop CS6 are on the outside, which is again a departure from previous releases where cosmetic differences have been minimal. There are now four interface colour options, with black replacing grey as the

standard (though it's easy to revert back). This offers more aesthetic choice, but it's practical too – certain artworks lend themselves better to being worked on in black. If you have previously used Lightroom, then this redesigned user interface will feel more familiar than it will to those coming straight from Photoshop CS5 or earlier.

Some of the palettes have been streamlined as well. The Mini Bridge palette is no longer in the main dock, but is a strip across the bottom of the page. The Layers palette has a new Filter option, so you can search for layers in large documents easily. The new Properties palette stores all your masks and adjustment layers in an image so that you can easily alter them all from one place.

The best way to find out how the new interface works is simply to try it for yourself, and as you read through this feature you will discover lots of hidden secrets that definitely make Photoshop CS6 worth the upgrade.

PRICING, AVAILABILITY AND CREATIVE SUITES

Photoshop CS6 is available on its own in the Standard or Extended versions, through the Creative Cloud and as part of a choice of Creative Suites. All these products are expected to be available in May and can be pre-ordered now. All UK prices exclude VAT.

Photoshop CS6 Standard	From £159/\$199 (upgrade) £556/\$699 (full)
Photoshop CS6 Extended	From £309/\$399 (upgrade) £794/\$999 (full)
Master Collection	From £397/\$525 (upgrade) £2,223/\$2,599 (full)
Design Standard	From £219/\$275 (upgrade) £1,032/\$1,299 (full)
Design & Web Premium	From £298/\$375 (upgrade) £1,509/\$1,899 (full)
Production Premium	From £298/\$375 (upgrade) £1,509/\$1,899 (full)
Creative Cloud	£38.11/\$49.99 a month (annual contract) £57.17/\$74.99 a month (month-by-month)
Photoshop CS6 subscription	£14.29/\$19.99 a month (annual contract) £22.23/\$29.99 a month (month-by-month)

■ YOUR THOUGHTS

We asked you what your first thoughts were on Photoshop CS6 and here's what you said...

- Dáire Goodwin (Facebook): I don't like the new dark grey interface... but it can be reversed!
- Joakim Unge (Facebook): Will be getting it for the dark interface alone, hah! Oh, and the new 3D and Tilt-Shift feature is nice.
- Jeroen Callewaert (Facebook): I'm impressed with the overall GPU support. The dark UI, the high-end capabilities of the Liquify tool, better performance workflow = happy user.
- Daniel Damocles Wall (Facebook): I ended up using the Oil Paint filter for some parts of a illustration gig, which I normally would never do, but it worked really well. However, I really like the new 3D interface. It's a nice, fairly intuitive way to incorporate some simple 3D stuff into my workflow. I can't wait to dig in deeper!

■ CONTENT-AWARE PATCH

Make specific selections and heal images using this automated clone tool

Content-aware technology was one of the major updates that put Photoshop CS5 on many professional photographers' radars. This modern imaging technology heralded a new era for enhanced automated image editing, presenting highly intuitive functionality for Photoshop users.

Photoshop CS6 has seen further radical enhancements with the new Content-Aware Patch tool. Not a strict replacement for the Content-Aware Fill option, which still exists, this tool looks to provide users with a hands-on way to achieve precise results.

The Content-Aware Fill option was notorious for grabbing bits and pieces from the surrounding objects.

01 | WORK WITH THE RIGHT MODEL

We didn't find the Content-Aware Patch tool ideal for detailed retouching procedures, but when swapping out larger facial details it handles well. However the process works best with face-on profile shots, like with this sequence of images.



02 | GET THE RIGHT SETTINGS

The Content-Aware Patch tool only functions with a single image, so merging your image layers is a must. We suggest setting your Adaptation option to Loose, before making a selection of the facial regions you want to alter.



03 | ACHIEVE THE BEST RESULT

Last, drag and align your selection from one model to the next, and watch Photoshop CS6 work its magic. Any artefacts or problematic edges are minimal, but can be amended with the standard Patch tool.



■ CONTENT-AWARE MOVE

Let Photoshop CS6 intuitively relocate and replace image content

If the Content-Aware Patch tool is all about taking, then the Content-Aware Move tool is about giving, making it easier for you to replace and reposition existing image elements into new locations.

The tool's Content-Aware technology works yet again in unison with user selections. After targeting the image element you want to reposition, simply drag it to its new position. CS6 algorithms manage and replace the newly aligned and deleted object seamlessly into the same layer.

What this means is a huge improvement in limiting time-intensive production, which is great news for photo-based professionals. However, much like the Content-Aware Fill option, Content-Aware Move can be prone to grabbing bits and pieces from the surrounding objects. This shouldn't diminish enthusiasm for using this tool though. Like many Photoshop options, it couples with other intuitive operations to get professional results.

Most of the tool's success hinges on the selections you make of an object. We would

suggest that you make selections using the Pen tool, which offers far more control with Bezier Curve functionality, making it easier to match edges. Then use the Refine Shape options to specify your selection edges further. Or you could activate the Select>Modify options, choosing Expand.

The Content-Aware Move tool also has its own settings that help manage edge selection and ultimately improve results. These are known as Adaption options, letting you set from Very Strict to Very Loose.

Each of these works best with a specific background type, from detailed to uniform. Less subsequent applications take place with the latter style of backdrop, which Content-Aware Move works best with, much like other similar options.

The Mode>Extend option lets you duplicate your selection into multiple new positions, but we will warn that this option lacks any colour adjustment intuition, so lighting and colour values stay true to your original selection.



■ THE BLUR GALLERY

Apply even more control over focal points and depth of field in your images

Photoshop CS6 sees several cool updates to its Filter options. The most apparent are the new types of automated blur effects you can apply. Field Blur is great for simulating degrees of depth of field (DOF). Iris Blur puts a central area in focus, with surrounding soft edges that are great for directing photo focal points. Tilt-Shift simulates lens effects that can create a miniaturised look. This is currently a very popular feature in the photographic community.

The operation of these new filters has been radicalised. Effects are now applied through control points, known as Pins. Blur amounts can be controlled with a settings wheel by simply dragging and clicking clockwise or anti-clockwise. Pins can

also be applied in multiples, enabling even greater user control.

Each new Blur filter lets you set Blur and even Distortion (Tilt-Shift only) amounts, but the Blur Effects menu enables you to edit further. This includes Bokeh Light, Bokeh Color, and Light Range sliders, which all serve to illuminate, saturate and tweak image and blur exposure to perfection.

The ability to stack your new blur filters also exists to create more advanced effects, although in a fixed order. You'll also discover a High Quality option, which protracts effect render times, but offers better results. Your settings needn't be a one-time affair either, with the ability to save results to your Channel palette.

TOP TIP

SHORTCUT PREVIEWS

There are two keys that let you see how images are affected by blur effects more clearly. Pressing the H key hides all guides, making it easier to comprehend the effect of your applied settings. Pressing M shows a preview of the gradient mask, so users can realise the areas they are affecting at the time.



FIELD BLUR

The best way to achieve a strong DOF effect is to place multiple Pins adjacent to one another, creating direction according to the existing depth of field in your photo. Set your Pin closest to the foot of your image at a higher blur amount, gradually decreasing in subsequent pins. Move any additional Pins to update your effect live on the screen.



IRIS BLUR

Iris Blur is the most rudimentary of the new filters, but holds the most itemisation of settings. Users can expand and reduce control points to establish the proximity of your blur, even feather or sharpen your gradient mask edges. Holding Opt/Alt will let you alter control points individually instead of all together, as with the default operation.

TIILT-SHIFT

Tilt-Shift makes the very most of the Blur Effects settings. A band of focus can be set with simple movable guides, with a linear gradient mask designating this filter's transitional blur. By increasing Blur Effects>Light Bokeh and Bokeh Color, you can saturate tonality to complement synthetic looks and cool miniaturised effects.

■ NEW CROP TOOLS

Non-destructive crop tools with a host of new time-saving presets

Photoshop CS6's Mercury Graphics Engine means a significant boost in GPU-accelerated options and tools – ensuring these work faster, rendering in real-time, as well as performing more advanced applications. Those that have benefited from this upgrade are the new CS6 crop tools, now with transform perspective capabilities.

Users will instantly notice how images interact with the Crop tool guide. Your image now moves within the cropping space, meaning you don't have to fit this manually to your image, as with previous Photoshop software. Consequently, users can line up images far more intuitively than before, by eye and in real-time.

This is complemented with a host of tool presets that can be activated from the View drop options – including the Rule of Thirds, Golden Ratio and more. Crop guides can also be set to constrain aspect ratios, with further drop option presets. An easy one-click Rotate option enables users to move a crop selection between landscape and portrait mode, to make the scrutiny of the cropped area more accessible.

The Set Additional Crop options let you optimise your viewing of results even further. Here you can deactivate and re-activate the Crop Shields, that show or hide

interfering visual areas outside your crop guide, editing this area's opacity also.

Users can also get rid of this outside region completely if it helps with viewing and subsequent decision making, by deactivating the Show Cropped Area option (H key). If you prefer the classic operation of this tool, it can be activated here too.

The Perspective Crop tool is a hidden gem, brought to the front in CS6. This offers further radical image editing effects. The tool is simple to use, working best with images that have a pre-existing distorted perspective.

This option applies a crop guide in a grid format, which offers you the ability to distort individual edges as well as vertical and horizontal dimensions with manoeuvrable control points – all in real-time, again making the most of that GPU acceleration.

Once you've used these control points and crop grid guide, to map the perspective of your existing image element, simply hit Enter and let it work its magic. What the Perspective Crop tool will then do is correct crooked selections, straightening out visual elements. This is great for photo editors looking to achieve keystone effects, or repurpose textures and elements for projects.



TOP TIP CYCLE OVERLAY OPTION

Additional drop options are always a big plus, meaning even more settings to complement your production. However, this can also mean you waste valuable time, clicking and scrolling through. Not with this tool though. Simply press the O key to cycle through your View option presets.

■ SKIN TONES SELECTION OPTION

Speed up face detection with this new feature

Photoshop CS6 has galvanised its working relationship with retouch artists and photo editors, with multiple improvements and new additions to photo fixing and selection options. The latest Skin Tones option is a shining example.

It's true that many retouchers will already have routine techniques for picking up skin regions. But for amateurs, enthusiasts, or those photographers who simply want to work quickly without the necessity of layer mask editing, this is a highly productive alternative to have.

Users can activate this option from the Color Range dialog box, under the Select menu. Skin Tones sits at the foot of the Select drop options. Photoshop will intuitively select skin tones, with selected areas easily specified with the Fuzziness slider. Activate Detect Faces for a more comprehensive selection, including hair detail, which is great for selecting the entire model profile.

The Selection Preview makes affected areas far more apparent, mapping them through Grayscale (view results similar to the Threshold option), White Matte, Black Matte and Quick Mask settings. All settings result in a layer selection, which you can use to edit skin tones and exposure when coupled with adjustment layers or an applied layer mask. However, you should know that the Skin Tones option only operates in RGB Color Mode.



Improved automation for professionals: This new option has made a massive difference to this menu's selective capabilities, now making detecting facial regions all the more faster.

Expert quote

Kirk Nelson
Photoshop Trainer

The Skin Tones and Detect Faces features in the Color Range dialog is a welcome addition to the selection tools. The thing to keep in mind with this feature is that it's not a one-click solution, rather it provides an excellent starting point while crafting a selection. It's one of those features where you feel like Photoshop is actively working with you, not striving against you or purposely getting in your way.

■ CAMERA RAW 7

Camera Raw now offers new sliders and a manual application tool



001 Instead of a dedicated tool you get an Erase option set, which is great if you only want to work away to a lesser degree than your original effect. To completely erase, we'd recommend just holding the Opt/Alt key

002 All settings are set to midpoints so you can fully adjust to your own specifications. This reflects how users want to make their own tweaks, with new software technology complementing this

003 Two new sliders, Shadows and Highlights, have now been included. These recover light and dark values at a far better rate, and make more sense when amending the Histogram

004 The Camera Raw Adjustment Brush applies Pin markers for each image region. Select the new Options button to work with multiple Pins. These are live at all times, like adjustment layers – simply activate one and tweak with sliders

005 The Adjustment Brush Color option lets you apply from a blue to yellow spectrum, with its plus and minus buttons. This lets you manually cool or warm image areas, much like Photoshop's Photo Filter adjustment layer

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Adobe's Camera Raw converter has had a productive facelift in accordance with the Photoshop CS6 launch. Version 7 enables you to edit your digital negatives more flexibly than ever before, improving the precision of both manual and automated tools and options.

Camera Raw 7 gives even the most compressed images, including those taken from tablet and smartphone device cameras, a total visual overhaul. This is partly due to its improved menu, now providing two entirely new options.

The somewhat confusingly titled Fill and Recovery sliders have been replaced with the more comprehensible Highlights and Shadows sliders. These recover light and dark values at a far better rate than previously.

The addition of these two sliders also makes it easier for new users to understand how to edit the Histogram. This way they can make the required amendments and speed up their workflow. You can apply these along with your Exposure slider to balance out any visible clumping. Shadows will

group to the left, highlights to the right and exposure central.

The Clarity slider isn't new but has been thoroughly enhanced in version 7. This option is now far more robust in application, eradicating any fear of haloing that appeared in previous software versions.

Even more impressive is that all the above, as well as additional Sharpness and Noise Reduction settings, can be applied manually with the new Adjustment Brush. This can be selected from the menu above your workspace, or by pressing the K key.

The Adjustment Brush options let you configure your brush settings through Size, Feather, Flow and Density, which is akin to an Opacity setting. The brush cursor will visually translate your effects through its own appearance. The inner circle represents your paint region, the outer circle the transitional area of your Feather. Setting your Feather amount to 0 per cent will synchronise both circle outlines and increase value vice versa.

Camera Raw 7 gives even the most compressed images, including those taken from tablet and smartphone cameras, a total visual overhaul

TOP TIP NEW AUTOMATE OPTIONS

Camera Raw 7 deals with preproduction but CS6 has brought back an old favourite postproduction option. Automate>Contact Sheet II is once again available directly in-app, to make a quick and easy sample spread of your photo collections for clients and buyers.

■ LIGHTING EFFECTS FILTER

Master multiple lighting effects with this feature's new interface and options



A common complaint among Photoshop users is that some of the Filter option dialog boxes don't display applied effects at a perceivable scale. Many are especially tricky when regarding the Render options. This has been remedied with the Render>Lighting Effects option, now presenting an improved interface, which is far larger after a serious reshuffling of option sets.

Choosing which style of light to apply is still presented through preset drop options, now displayed in the Options bar overhead. Here

you'll also find three core Lights options, which determine the fundamental nature of your simulated light fall.

Spot Light is the most manual of these three, controlling both strength and direction. Point Light is much like a light bulb, with applicable strength but not direction. Infinite Light is more global, so users can control direction from a fixed position.

Affected areas are edited with the use of the Properties menu and a new and intuitive control point system, much like but not wholly identical to the Blur Gallery option. Effect amounts are again controlled with a settings wheel, simply dragging and clicking clockwise or anti-clockwise.

An inner ellipse defines the diffuse of your light, controlled with the Hotspot slider from the Properties. At the top of this menu is a drop option that lets you cycle through the previous three options. The Properties menu has a host of other slider options to discover.

The Colorize and Ambience tools have become synonymous. The first option functions as you'd expect, a filter to apply a colour wash to your image exposure. When reacting with Ambience settings, both act together to increase or decrease luminosity and even temperature of an image. Gloss and Metallic options are unchanged. The new Lighting Effects option enables the layering of multiple lighting styles and settings, with fixed layers in the Lights palette. This means you can build more authentic results in real-time.

What's more, Lighting Effects is completely compatible with Smart Objects. This makes this option non-destructive, so users can go back and tweak settings at later production dates, without degrading the quality of the layer.

Above and below left:
CS6 offers a whole range of new intuitive ways to control the lighting effects within your images

**TOP TIP
ADDING OBJECTS**
There are two keys that let you see how images are affected by blur effects more clearly. Pressing the H key hides all guides, making it easier to comprehend the effect of your applied settings. Pressing M shows a preview of the gradient mask, so users can realise the areas they are affecting at the time.

■ NEW 3D CONTROLS OVERVIEW

Now more easy and intuitive, apply all effects live through simple sliders and presets

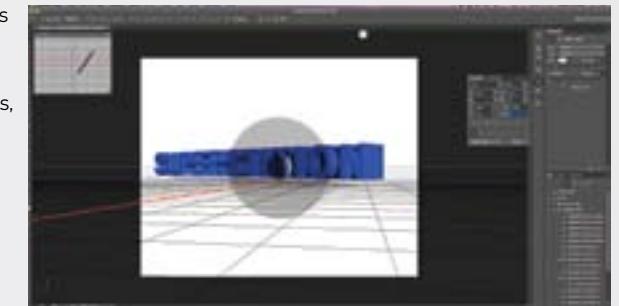
Photoshop has accommodated cross-platform production for a long time, becoming integral to CG production. Most of the time this is used as a postproduction asset, but with the new CS6 software more inclusive 3D production is now natively available.

Related tools and functions are far more intuitive, with users now able to create and manipulate 3D objects directly on their screens in real-time. This again underlines how Photoshop CS6 is more content-sensitive than previous versions.

This improved degree of manipulation is down to CS6's easy-to-navigate option sets. Viewing effects is so simple, with manoeuvre handles letting you zoom, rotate and position your 3D objects any way you like.

Scrubbing your effects from every angle is also instant with the new View Finder. This lets you set camera angles from top to bottom, left to right or back to front. Click the Swap Main and Secondary View button to alternate view instantly.

If you're working with 3D type then font styles can be quickly updated in the Character Panel, again live, through the familiar Characters palette. There's no need to leave your 3D workspace. The same can be said for bevel effects (Cap options), as well as tapering, twisting and extruding (Deform options).



Applying textures is as simple as selecting from a bunch of fun presets, reapplying your Diffuse, Specular and other colour light through the Color Picker.

All separate options have a

variation of a control wheel. This again operates like previous examples, offering you a more intuitive alternative to the available option slider, affecting your image's looks. Rendering your effects (3D-Render) becomes far less time-intensive thanks to the new improved GPU acceleration, with ray tracing resulting in incredibly authentic effects.

The Photoshop CS6 3D engine also enables the end user to import 3D objects in a wide range of formats. These include up-to-date versions of OBJ, Collada DAE, Flash 3D and Google Earth 4 KMZ. There's also the ability for one-click Stereo Scopic effects.

Lighting your object:
Your 3D object is lit through the same types as the Lighting Effects options and operates in a much similar fashion. You'll find this corresponds intuitively with your Shadow values and effects

■ VIDEO EDITING IN PHOTOSHOP CS6

Now available in Standard versions of Photoshop, video editing has made a leap forward, offering an accessible and simple solution for basic edits

Video editing was available in Photoshop CS5 Extended, but it has got a lot more intuitive and easier to use in this latest incarnation, not to mention the fact that it's now in the Standard edition, making it accessible for all.

It's not a dedicated video editor, so its controls are pretty basic, however if you shoot the odd video on your DSLR and want to trim it, for instance, then this is perfect. It is also great for creating slideshow products, mixing stills and videos, adding transitions and effects, bringing in music files and outputting as a video file.

There are some great little features in the toolbar. For example, if you cut a clip and delete a section of it, the gap between clips is automatically closed up.

Also, if you are looking to trim a clip, you can see a Heads-Up Display (HUD) of the video in a pop-up window, so that you can see exactly where you are trimming in detail.

Colour correction over multiple clips is also simple. You can use the usual adjustment layer options to apply levels, for example, then edit them as needed. These are applied like adjustment layers in that they are clipped to just the one layer, or clip, that you want to affect and it's non-destructive. It is exactly the same as using the tools in Photoshop, making it a familiar operation.

While the functions are more advanced than previously, the actual performance is much faster, with real-time playback as soon as edits are made.

TOP TIP

FIND VIDEO IN BRIDGE

Bridge can host all of your video clips, just as it does with your still projects. However in this version, unlike before, you can see a real-time preview of the video directly in Bridge. Also in Bridge you can see the video full-screen, add ratings and view metadata to help sort your clips.

01 | FIND VIDEO IN BRIDGE AND IMPORT

You can use Mini Bridge to find video clips on your system. Click on any clip to add it to the Timeline. You can then continue to add more clips to the same project from there by going to the little filmstrip icon with arrow in the Video Group 1 section on the Timeline, selecting Add Media.



02 | THE EDITING INTERFACE

Your clips are now in the Timeline panel, back-to-back. You can also see them listed as layers in the Layers panel. Your playback buttons can be found in the Timeline window, and you will see that an Audio Track can be dropped in underneath the video.



03 | TRIM CLIPS

The most common task is to trim clips, so navigate to where you want your video segment to end, then Ctrl/right-click and choose from the pop-up options, or hit the scissors icon. This will split the clip. You can delete the excess and Photoshop will bring the next clip forward.



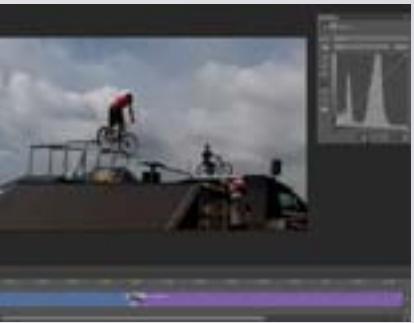
04 | ADD TRANSITIONS

You can add simple transitions between clips using the pop-up Transitions menu (the square icon next to the scissors). The default options are pretty basic, but they are handy. Pick the one you want and then drag to the Timeline between clips. You can set a duration and colours where needed.



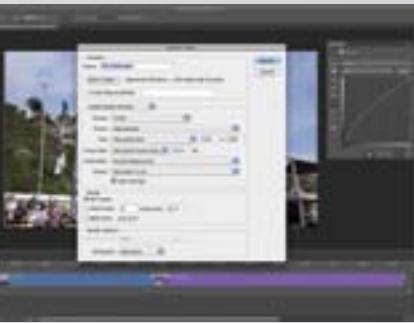
05 | COLOUR CORRECT

One of our video clips is darker, so we need to do some colour correction. Select the clip you want and apply an adjustment layer, just like with a still, from the bottom of the Layers panel. We have added a Curves layer, which is automatically clipped to only affect the one video layer.



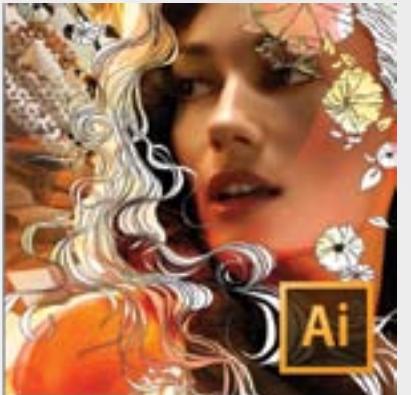
06 | RENDER YOUR VIDEO

When you've finished editing and are happy with your video, you can find a tiny icon in the bottom-left of the Timeline that will read Render Video. This brings up a dialog box where you can choose all your output and export settings for rendering out your video.



■ MEET THE REST OF THE CREATIVE SUITE

It's not just Photoshop that has had a major overhaul with CS6



Adobe Illustrator

Illustrator is one of the programs in CS6 that has been completely overhauled – in fact, it has been called a ‘historic release’ – to the point where it feels like a whole new program, and it’s a refreshing change. There are over 40 User Interface enhancements in total. The interface adopts the same black-window look as Photoshop and feels more familiar to users of Photoshop than previous incarnations. This will certainly lead to better integration between the two applications in the future.

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Pattern creation is another area that has been redesigned and simplified, so much so that those designers who would never before have attempted this complex task can get creating in moments, building seamlessly tiled patterns. There are instant previews as you work and applying patterns to vector shapes is almost instantaneous.

There are plenty of smaller improvements too, which build up to create a version worthy of the program’s 25th anniversary. This includes the ability to apply gradients on strokes, an adjustable interface, Transparency, Color, Character and Transform panels for easy access to commonly needed tools. It also offers better integration across the Creative Suite.

Adobe Flash

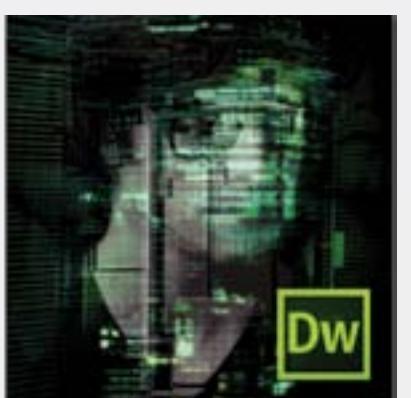
Flash Professional addresses one of the biggest problems previously associated with Flash. It offers wide platform and device support, meaning that content can be created and delivered to Android and iOS devices using the Adobe AIR 3.2 runtime.

The latest version has also targeted the gaming market, with many features being added to help online game developers and app creators. Bitmap-based sprite sheets make the most of the GPU to help with smoother playback and performance. This creates a single reference sheet of all animations and symbols



used within a Flash creation that can be referenced rather than loading every element individually.

App development is improved with the prepackaged AIR runtime settings, which enables embedding of AIR with an application so that it can be easily installed by a user for them to run the app. Apps can be tested in the Adobe AIR mobile simulations, so that they can be checked quickly and easily for bugs. It will be interesting to see whether Flash will undergo a resurgence in popularity with the many improvements in this version.



Adobe Dreamweaver

This is Adobe’s premium web creation application that enables you to build websites and pages in HTML5 and CSS3. In this version you can create a website for use on desktop browsers and preview the same design for smartphones, tablets and other mobile devices so that they can be made to work across as many platforms as possible.

Fluid grid layouts are an easy way to get started with designs, with three different adaptive layouts available for the most common mobile, tablet and desktop resolutions. You can then create layouts and rules to suit each of the intended devices, ensuring compatibility whatever your user opts to view your

website on. The real-time Multiscreen Preview then lets you view three different screen sizes at the same time to run your HTML5 and CSS3 code.

Mobile app development is an area that has been targeted throughout this release and Dreamweaver offers integration with the JQuery Mobile framework, which offers access to pre-built mobile themes or themes created in Fireworks. PhoneGap Build support also means that it is easy to add device-specific functionality to your apps easily.

Finally, there is also integrated access to Adobe Business Catalyst for help creating business sites with e-commerce attributes.

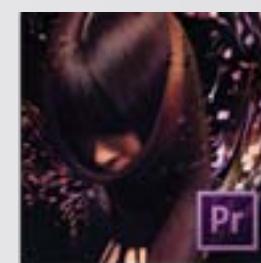


Adobe InDesign

InDesign CS6 builds on some of the innovations that we first saw in the CS5.5 release last year, with plenty of focus on reusing content in various layouts and for different platforms. It is aimed at those working in print, as always, but it has plenty of features for use in tablet app development and interactive PDF files.

Liquid Layout is a brilliant feature that enables simple repurposing of content. Create a page in one layout and then you can apply rules for where content needs to be placed in relation to guidelines or other elements. Resize the page and InDesign will alter the layout using your set rules, saving you loads of time and effort. Content can also be linked across multiple layouts, meaning that if it is adapted on one, then all of them can be instantly updated.

The Content Collector is a handy new panel where items, such as text, images and logos can be dragged into and held in the panel to be reused on further documents. This saves a lot of copy and paste action, and will be perfect for those re-creating content for multiple uses.



Adobe Premiere Pro

Video editing is promised to be a lot simpler and quicker with the new tools in Adobe Premiere Pro CS6. It has been redesigned using feedback from real-life users, getting rid of a lot of the clutter on the interface. This has made way for bigger preview windows, less buttons and more intuitive control. The workspace is more customisable than ever before, meaning that it can be tailored to your specific needs. However, the default workspace is so much more streamlined, that customisation isn’t necessarily needed in many cases.

The monitor panels (Source and Program) have been stripped back, so that they don’t have loads of buttons underneath; the buttons that are there can be amended so that you only see the ones that you use most often.

Other enhancements include a redesigned audio mixer, resizable thumbnails in the Media Browser, more powerful markers and advanced trimming features.



Adobe After Effects

After Effects CS6 has been described as the biggest release in ten years, offering better outcomes thanks to the new Global Performance Cache. This isn’t something that you would see on the interface, but is a combination of a whole host of technologies that will improve production times significantly. The caching system has been overhauled so that it’s easier to play around with different ideas and scenarios without having to wait for long render times. The cache is also retained when a project is reopened to save time. The whole program makes better use of OpenGL, as with the rest of the Creative Suite. An impressive addition to the program is the 3D Camera Tracker, which analyses motion in 2D footage so that you can move around a scene with a virtual 3D camera. A new ray-trace rendering engine, variable mask feathering and tighter integration with Illustrator all help to justify the promise of this program’s release.

■ BEST OF THE REST...

More CS6 upgrades from Adobe



Adobe Audition

This is Adobe’s sound-editing program for videogames, radio, broadcasts and much more. The CS6 upgrade offers wider support of audio and video formats, faster operation and more precise audio editing, improved sound analysis and noise reduction functions and better integration with Premiere Pro using roundtrip editing.



Adobe Edge

While this won’t be part of the CS6 suites, it is being released alongside it as part of the Creative Cloud. It has been in beta stage for a while and it’s designed to help add animated content to the web using HTML5, CSS3 and JavaScript. It runs perfectly on mobile devices and modern browsers.



Adobe Prelude

Aimed at video editors, this program is designed to help unify workflows, creating rough cuts with postproduction notes that can be integrated with Premiere Pro in a similar interface. It has incorporated a keyboard-driven logging system to speed up the process of inputting information. You can also add searchable markers and metadata.



Adobe SpeedGrade

This is a recent acquisition for Adobe from IRADIS and is a professional film grading application. It is designed to work seamlessly with Adobe’s other production tools, such as Premiere Pro and After Effects. As such it forms part of the Production Premium suite.

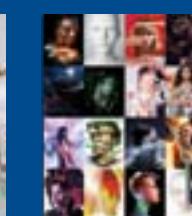
■ AVAILABLE SUITES



Design Standard



Design & Web Premium



Master Collection



Production Premium

■ INTRODUCING THE CREATIVE CLOUD

Use the Creative Cloud service to get all the Creative Suite programs at a reduced cost



Alongside Creative Suite 6, Adobe has also launched its Creative Cloud service, which has been in the works for a while now. This is a new way of accessing the programs in Creative Suite, offering the entire product line for one monthly fee. But there is more than just applications on offer. The Creative Cloud also provides a generous storage space for you to share documents created in CS6 and share them with others, including advanced online previews and the ability to download the files or make notes on them for feedback and collaboration. Finally, Creative Cloud gives access to programs not available with CS6; it provides a simple way to interact with the mobile apps available and there are a number of Business Catalyst websites provided for testing e-commerce projects.

Get all of CS6

The biggest advantage of the Creative Cloud is that it creates a more affordable way to get the entire Master Collection of CS6 products – that's 14 programs in total. The monthly fee (see the boxout for pricing) covers use of the programs on up to two systems and all future updates to the programs, meaning that it is a great way to future-proof your setup. The suite is enhanced with two HTML5 products that are only available through the Creative Cloud. These are Adobe Edge and Adobe Muse. Edge is designed to simply animate content for web and Muse lets you create simple websites without any coding knowledge.

Share and collaborate

Syncing and sharing is also a huge bonus. Any files created using a Creative Suite program can be shared via the Creative Cloud and others can access it. They can then view the document online, using powerful preview tools that enable them to

PRICING STRUCTURE

Counting the cost of the Creative Cloud

Creative Cloud membership will be available to customers in 36 countries in multiple languages

UK pricing

£38.11 a month (excluding VAT) for annual contract
£57.17 a month (excluding VAT) for month-by-month contract
£22.23 a month (excluding VAT) special introductory offer for CS3, CS4, CS5 and CS5.5 users for a limited time

US pricing

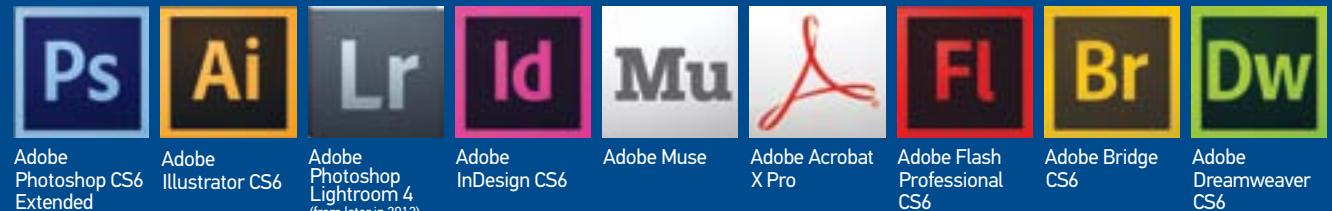
\$49.99 a month for annual contract
\$74.99 a month for month-by-month contract
\$29.99 a month special introductory offer for CS3, CS4, CS5 and CS5.5 users for a limited time

Student and multi-user options will also be available

■ WHAT'S INCLUDED

So what do you actually get in the Creative Cloud for your monthly fee?

PRODUCTS



APPS



SERVICES



“The Creative Cloud offers a great way to access all the Creative Suite programs that you will ever need. You can be safe in the knowledge that you have access to all future versions, keeping you one step ahead of the game

turn pages in an InDesign document, view links and metadata, and even turn layers on and off. Documents can be downloaded to be worked on further and updated, so collaborative work is simple. The Creative Cloud works with the Adobe Touch apps too. While these apps must be bought separately for the devices that they work on (they are all on Android and selected apps are on iOS, with the full range being iPad-friendly soon), they can connect to the Creative Cloud to share and access images. At the moment you get 20GB of Creative Cloud storage, though there will be options to purchase more storage for those with greater requirements.

Additional benefits

The Creative Cloud gives access to a few services owned by Adobe as well. This includes Adobe Typekit, which is a web-based font library that offers more than 700 typefaces for the use of real fonts on the web. Business Catalyst is now integrated into the service, offering the ability to create and publish

business websites made in Muse or Dreamweaver. You get a set number of Business Catalyst websites included in your Creative Cloud membership to get you started. Finally there is Adobe Story Plus, a collaborative screen-writing service.

The Creative Cloud hasn't even peaked yet, as there are more additions coming to the service in the near future. Notably, Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 4 is not currently included in the programs available, not being part of CS6, however this is due to be added soon. Adobe Edge will soon have its first complete release (it is in a preview, beta stage at the time of launch), and the Digital Publishing Suite Single Edition will also be added to help with the creation of various new-media products.

All in all, the Creative Cloud offers a great way to access all the Creative Suite programs that you will ever need. It is good for those on a budget, as the cost can be spread each month and you can be safe in the knowledge that you have access to all future versions and updates, keeping you one step ahead.



Creative Cloud online: The Adobe Creative Cloud web page has all of the latest information on availability, pricing and new features

TOP TIP JUST NEED PHOTOSHOP?

The Creative Cloud is very much all or nothing, as you need to buy a membership to access the entire suite. If you are just interested in getting Photoshop on a budget, then subscription plans are available. They start from under £15 a month (excluding VAT).

■ PHOTOSHOP CS6 RESOURCES

Get a head start in Photoshop CS6

As with every significant software launch from Adobe, complementary resources soon follow. These shouldn't be viewed as just bandwagon paraphernalia, as many will become integral to you learning the new functions rapidly.

Books are especially beneficial. Pages are packed with edifying material, presented through thumbnails, case studies and manageable tuition. The best manuals will also come with a complementary resource CD, so readers can get hands-on and re-create what they learn. Some titles may be technically driven, others have a creative focus.

Of course, books can be seen as hit and miss, having to purchase to discover required content. This means that many will be apprehensive about parting with their hard-earned cash. This is where free portal sites come into play.

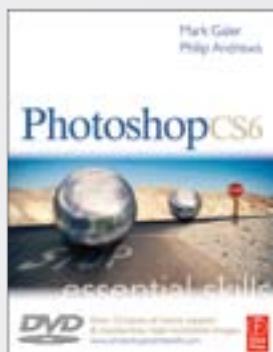
There are many sites dedicated to updating details of the latest CS6 products. These are normally through news articles or more visually stimulating step-by-step tutorials. Here, enthusiasts can access and absorb experience and understanding far more freely.

For the more academically minded professionals, who like a more structured learning path, online courses are highly beneficial. Courses are tailored to accommodate a variety of aptitude levels, with multiple entry points for a variety of Photoshop users.

These are the more expensive solutions to learning Photoshop CS6, but then again offer peace of mind, letting creatives cut away the fat and get straight to what they want to know.

■ PHOTOSHOP CS6: ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- £28/\$45 Available in June 2012
- www.focalpress.com



This structured, self-study guide helps novice creatives and designers digest the fundamental techniques needed to use Photoshop CS6 effectively and confidently. A complete section of step-by-step imaging projects hones image editing skills for professional, quality results. Written by top-selling photography authors and Adobe Photoshop Ambassadors Mark Galer and Philip Andrews, it includes an accompanying DVD.

■ PHOTOSHOPDAILY.COM

- £N/A
- www.photoshopdaily.co.uk



PhotoshopDaily is dedicated to bringing its global audience the latest news, reviews and tutorials geared towards digital imaging and improving your creative skills. Here you'll find a host of Photoshop CS6 themed content – from reviews of new CS6 functionality, walkthroughs on the software's new tools and much, much more.

■ PHOTOSHOP CS6 FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS NEW FEATURES

- Subscription from \$25/month
- www.lynda.com

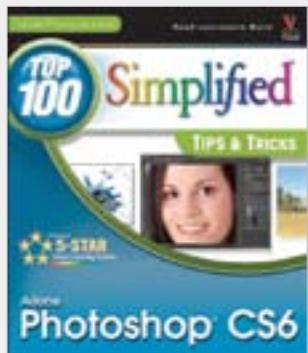


This online course provides well over three hours of detailed analysis of new Photoshop CS6 tools that improve photography workflows. Authored by Chris Orwig, it helps users of previous Photoshop versions make upgrade decisions and get up to speed with CS6. It addresses on-the-fly Liquify adjustments, content-aware retouching, photorealistic blur effects, and more.

■ PHOTOSHOP CS6 TOP 100 SIMPLIFIED TIPS & TRICKS

- £18/\$TBA Available in May 2012
- eu.wiley.com

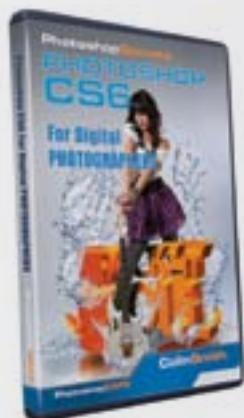
Adobe Photoshop CS6 Top 100 Simplified Tips & Tricks provides adventurous Photoshop users with a visual reference on how to use the bells and whistles found in the latest version of Photoshop. Full-colour screen



shots and step-by-step guides show readers how to take their skills to the next level. The book places more focus on visuals than lengthy text, meaning you can read less and learn much more.

■ PHOTOSHOP CS6 FOR DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

- \$100
- www.photoshopcafe.com

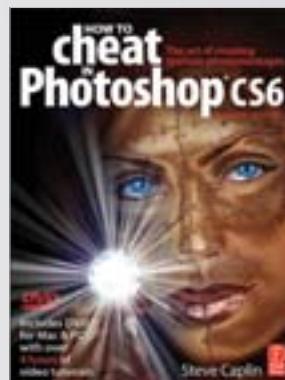


along, but deep enough for an advanced user to gain new skills.

A fully comprehensive A-Z video, completely remade just for CS6. This training incorporates all the new features into the updated workflows. Learn all the Content-Aware tools, sharpening, skin retouching and a whole lot more. Tons of tips are sprinkled into the training, so that this title is easy enough for a beginner to follow

■ HOW TO CHEAT IN PHOTOSHOP CS6

- £28/\$45 Available in July 2012
- www.focalpress.com



Photomontage master Steve Caplin shows readers how to utilise the new features in CS6 efficiently, as well as how to make an image look like something else entirely. This resource is for all kinds of creatives inside and out of the

industry such as retouchers, designers, illustrators and graphic artists. The book is now in its eighth edition and comes fully updated to cover the new features found in CS6. A packed DVD and supplemental website complete the package.