

PHOTOSHOP BASICS GUIDE

Essential tools, shortcuts, and workflow to help you edit like a pro and create stunning images.

YOUR QUICK REFERENCE
CHEAT SHEET

VOL. 1



PRO TIP

Non-destructive editing is key! Use layers, masks, and smart objects to keep your options open.

1 WORKSPACE OVERVIEW

Familiarize yourself with the Photoshop interface. Here are the main areas and their purpose.

Options Bar

Changes based on the active tool. Adjust settings and preferences here.

Toolbar

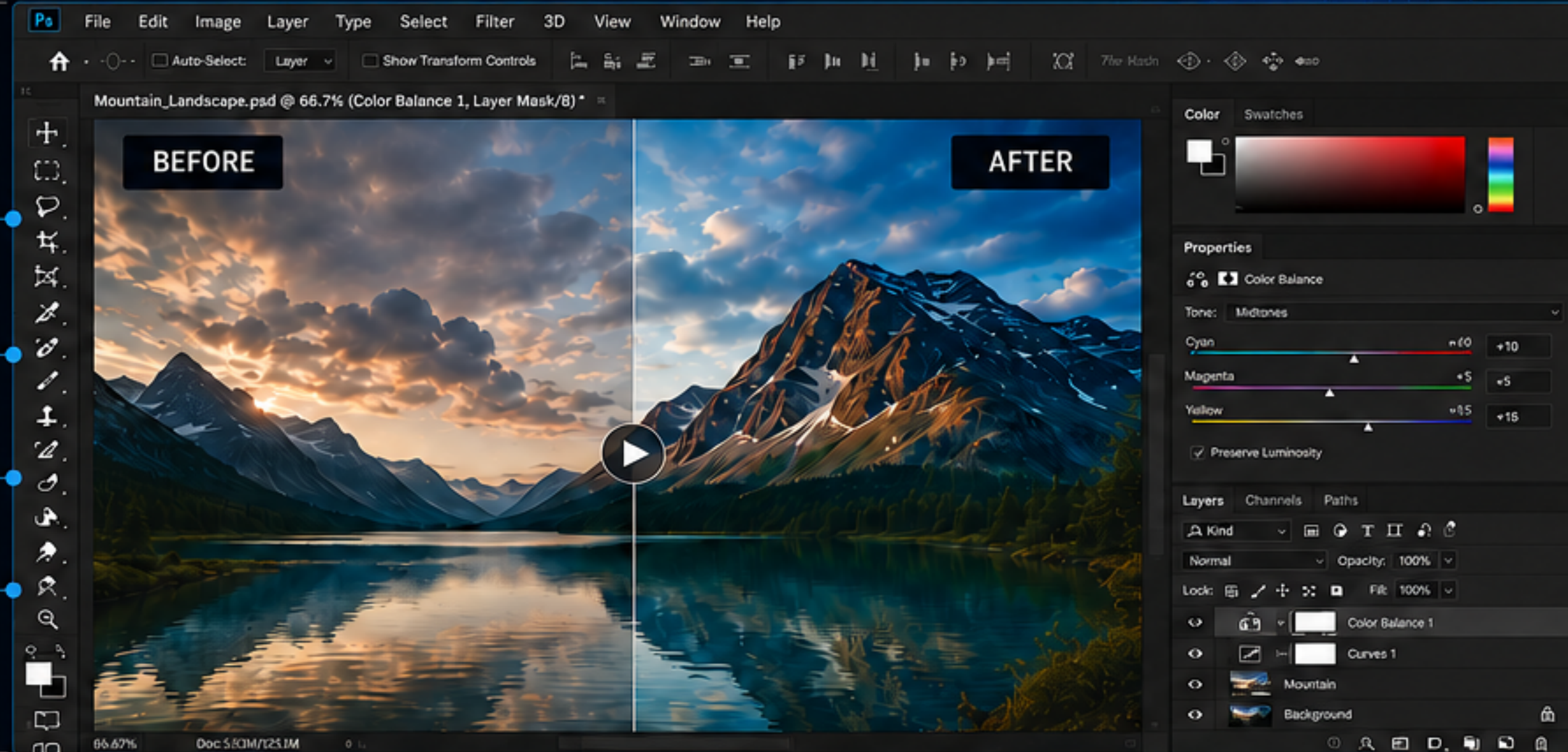
Your primary tools live here. Click and hold for more tool options.

Document Window

This is your canvas where you create and edit.

Panels

Access panels like Layers, Properties, Adjustments, and more.



Color Panel

Pick colors, create swatches, and manage color.

Properties Panel

Adjustments and properties for the active layer or tool.

Layers Panel

Manage layers, groups, blending modes, opacity, and layer effects.

Status Bar

View zoom level, document size, and color profile info.

2 ESSENTIAL TOOLS

	Move Tool (V)	Move and align layers.
	Marquee Tool (M)	Make selections (rectangular, elliptical, single row/column).
	Lasso Tool (L)	Freehand and precise selections.
	Quick Selection (W)	Smart selection with AI.
	Crop Tool (C)	Crop and straighten images.
	Brush Tool (B)	Paint, apply effects and masks.
	Clone Stamp (S)	Paint with pixels from another area.
	Eraser Tool (E)	Erase pixels or parts of layers.
	Gradient Tool (G)	Create gradient fills.
	Type Tool (T)	Add and edit text.
	Hand Tool (H)	Pan around the document.
	Zoom Tool (Z)	Zoom in and out.

3 ESSENTIAL SHORTCUTS

SHORTCUT	FUNCTION
Ctrl + N	New Document
Ctrl + O	Open Document
Ctrl + S	Save
Ctrl + Shift + S	Save As
Ctrl + J	Duplicate Layer
Ctrl + T	Free Transform
Ctrl + Z	Undo
Ctrl + Shift + Z	Redo
Ctrl + D	Deselect
Ctrl + Alt + Z	Step Backward
Ctrl + Alt + Shift + Z	Step Forward
Ctrl + R	Show/Hide Rulers
Ctrl + ;	Show/Hide Guides
Spacebar (Hold)	Hand Tool (Pan)
Alt (Hold)	Zoom In / Out
Shift (Hold)	Constrain Proportions

4 LAYERS BASICS

	New Layer	Create a new layer.
	Duplicate Layer	Duplicate selected layer.
	Delete Layer	Remove selected layer.
	Group Layers	Organize layers in a group.
	Rename Layer	Double click layer name.
	Layer Order	Drag layers to reorder.
	Blend Mode	Change how layers blend.
	Opacity	Make layer more/less visible.

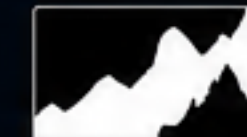
TIP: Use Adjustment Layers to edit non-destructively.



5 SELECTIONS & MASKS

	Make Selection	Use tools or Select > All.
	Refine Edge	Select > Select and Mask.
	Add Layer Mask	Click the Add Layer Mask icon.
	Brush on Mask	White reveals, black hides.
Mask Shortcuts		
X	Switch Foreground / Background	
D	Reset Colors (Black / White)	
\	Show / Hide All Masks	

TIP: Masks let you hide parts of layers without deleting pixels.



6 EXPORT SETTINGS

JPG

Best for photos & web
File > Export > Export As > JPG
Small file size, great quality.

PNG

Best for graphics & transparency
File > Export > Export As > PNG
Supports transparency.

PDF

Best for print & documents
File > Save As > PDF
Great for multi-page or print.

TIP: Use File > Export > Export As for all export options.

7 PRO TIPS



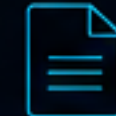
Use **Layer Masks** to edit non-destructively and hide/reveal content.



Use **Smart Objects** to resize and edit without losing quality.



Use **Adjustment Layers** for color corrections and effects.



Keep **PSD Files** Save your work in PSD for future edits.



Use **Guides & Grids** to align elements perfectly.



Use **History States** to step back anytime you need.

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