



This DVD is dedicated to Photoshop Elements 8 layers and we start with the real basics. We have pitched our tutorials at those who want to learn layers, but are struggling a little. Layers are too important to give up on, so read on.....



Layers are the gateway to creative digital photography and if you use Elements 8 without making full use of layers, you are allowing around 80% of the power that Elements has to offer, pass you by. Almost everything we do that is creative starts with layers. Repairs and adjustments to our images can be done easier and more effectively using the layers.

Everyone has a problem grasping the concept of layers at first and that is not unusual at all. It has nothing to do with the ability to learn or a measure of intelligence or age. Its rather like driving a car, when we first start driving we think we will never grasp all we have to do and think about, but a couple

of weeks later, our confidence builds up and everything starts to drop into place. Layers is much the same, but if you never use Elements Layers, you will never learn them.

As usual our DVD is packed with tutorials and information in full screen video. All the start and finished images are included to allow you to follow the tutorial with our images if you wish. Our finished images are also included to enable you to evaluate the work we did while recording the tutorial. Copyright of all images does remain with Beckham Digital and the images must not be used either whole or in part in any other images.



Like many things in life that are worthwhile, layers just takes a little effort for us to get our head around, but once you do, you will never look back.

The Concept of Layers - 25:21 Minutes

Before we can make creative use of layers in Elements 8, we need to understand The Concept of Layers. Once we understand what is going on in the layers palette and how that relates to our images on screen everything starts to become easier.

We have included all the images we used in this section already prepared for you. So, use our images and follow our step by step tutorial and you will soon be creating layers yourself and understanding exactly what you are doing and why.

Let's try and get the concept of layers a bit more clear in our minds and then we will broaden that knowledge with a series of real life projects that will bring layers into focus. Don't worry, if after this section things are still not crystal clear. As we go through the remaining tutorials you will begin to see just why layers are so powerful within this software.



The Layered Lion - 14:31 Minutes

Sometimes beyond our control we can have an image spoilt just as ours is here by a bright high-light in the top right corner.



In many circumstances we would reach for our

Clone Tool to make a repair, but the Clone Tool isn't foolproof.

Often, what we have to do is beyond the Clone Tools capabilities, certainly to the quality we are looking for.



Then we need to look towards another technique and Layers comes to our rescue. Layers allows us to make a perfect repair, with no visible sign at all, plus the technique is quicker too. Probably the best thing about this technique is that it's one you can take to the bank. What we mean is that this technique can be used in almost any image and will come to your rescue again and again.

Soldiers on Parade - 44:00 Minutes - In Two parts

Here we create another image from almost nothing, using the power of Elements 8 layers.

Layers really are the key to creative work and once we understand their concept and begin to feel comfortable with them, great images will start to flow.

We have dealt with partially transparent images in both our starter DVD and now this one, so here we deviate a little from layers and demonstrate how you can make a first class selection and transparency of almost any subject.



Then we take our Elements 8 Layers and reinforce the layers concept and create a striking image, all with the power of layers. All we need to add is the creativity and a little bit of time.

Adjustment Layers - 21:23 Minutes

If you have ever heard the saying, "Having your cake and eating it", then you can apply that to Adjustment Layers. Here we get to make adjustments with no risk to our original image at all.



When we first start image editing we are usually over the moon with the ability we have to change the colour, contrast and tone, globally in an image. However, as we gain more experience we then notice that many of our images cannot be corrected for tone and contrast globally. We often need to apply changes to 2,3 or more places in the image independently of each other.

Our starting image to the left cannot be adjusted with a global setting, so we turn to an Adjustment Layer, or two

What we are able to do here is to adjust the foreground independently to the sky, so we get the best of all worlds.

In fact, we added a second adjustment layer to affect just the bottom right corner greater than the remainder of the foreground.

Adjustment layers also introduce you to layer masks, but it is better we demonstrate those, rather than trying to explain here.

A picture can be worth a thousand words, as they say.



Creative Adjustment Layers - 13:49 Minutes



Adjustment Layers are also a great way of adding creativity to our work and here we offer a simple technique.

Using the Adjustment Layer we can turn our image black and white or any tone we please, at the same time allowing colour to come through in just one strategic place.

Adjustment layers make this a simple technique and one where there is no risk at all. The adjustment layer protects our original image until we are ready to amalgamate all the layers.



Creating a Montage - 21:22 Minutes



Layers are also the key to superimposing one image over the top of another. This layers technique can be used simply with a couple of images or in more complex montage images. By using layers, masks and layer blend modes, we can allow the textures and tones in one image blend nicely into the other.

These creative techniques can help us to achieve a very eye catching and dramatic images. Here we take a rusty, wet, oily concrete sleeper and add a steam train. The result is an image with impact and something a little different from the norm.

This is also one of those techniques that is great for experimenting. Try different layer blend modes and subjects for some great results. In this demonstration we are learning more about why layers are a must know part of Photoshop Elements 8



Text, Text Effects and Layer Styles - 28:28 minutes

When we look at text, text effects and layer styles there is probably enough material to fill a whole DVD with videos.

Here we explain how the text tool works in conjunction with layers and also how to add some great layer styles to your text.

In addition we demonstrate a little creative stuff too.



Lighten Eyes with Layers - 06:45 minutes



This is a simple layers technique, but it is another of those techniques you can use over and over again. We can use layers to lighten eyes in animal or human portraits quickly and effectively. You can see from the thumbnail left we have a nice portrait of the male lion, but the eyes are dull and lifeless.



Taking only a few seconds we can fix the problem and the great thing about this technique is that it is controllable. We can quickly increase the lightening effect or decrease it to match the image we are working on.

Creating a Watercolour Effect - 12:31 minutes



The one thing we do need to do when using layers to create unique filter effects is to see the image at print size. Now that is exactly what we are not doing here by looking at a small thumbnail from the original. So, you are not going to be able to appreciate the effect looking at our example.

The trick with layers is trying to produce something different and unique if we can and layers are the key to that. Here we demonstrate a neat effect that works extremely well.

Replacing Skies - 14:16 minutes



I wish I had a £ or a couple of Aussie dollars for every time I have been asked this question. How do I replace a sky? What makes this a little more difficult is that different images will require slightly different techniques.

In our example here the technique is not too difficult, but we also demonstrate how we can do the same thing when we have trees in our image. Then a different approach is needed. The trick is knowing which one to use, but we think we can help with this video.

