

Keyboard Commands and Shortcuts



Keyboard shortcuts are the secret to unlocking Photoshop's speed. More than any NLE, Photoshop relies on key combos to get complex tasks done quickly.

Overlooked Commands

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|------------------|---|
| File Menu | |
| Close All | Cmd+Option+W (Ctrl+Alt+W) |
| Save As | Choose from 18 formats (more through special plug-ins). Photoshop is the ultimate graphic converter. Shift+Cmd+S (Shift+Ctrl+S) |
| Save for Web | It doesn't get any more intuitive. Choose the two-up window, resize and compress your image for the web or e-mail. Now you can safely send the client an approval copy without having to worry about messing up your original. Shift+Option+Cmd+S (Shift+Alt+Ctrl+S) |
| Place | Can't open it? Try placing it. This is how you can bring in EPS, AI, or PDF files. It allows you to position and scale an image (via a bounding box). When you click OK, Photoshop will rasterize it at the proper size, position, and resolution. |
| Automate Submenu | These are some of the most useful tools for preparing client comps. Whether for print, web, or e-mail, the Automate options take boring tasks and make them quick and easy. Think of this menu as Photoshop's batch rendering option. (Think of batch rendering as the only chance you may get for caffeine, nicotine, or vending machine—the vices for an editor.) To learn more, see Chapter 11, "Automation." |

Overlooked Commands (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Edit Menu | |
| Step Forward and Step Backward | Multiple undos. See Chapter 6, “A Sense of History.” The keyboard shortcut varies based on your user-specified preferences in the General Preferences tab. |
| Fade | Not happy with the results of a filter or an adjustment? Choose this immediately after running the filter. By the way, did I mention this adds blending modes to <i>all</i> filters? Your filter collection just grew 2100%. Try it now! Give your filters new life! Remember: you must choose this immediately after running a filter. This is quite possibly Photoshop’s most underused feature. (Shift+Cmd+F/Shift+Ctrl+F) |
| Copy Merged | Copy multiple layers into one layer on your clipboard. Why flatten unnecessarily? (Shift+Cmd+C/Shift+Ctrl+C) |
| Check Spelling, Find and Replace Text | We asked; Adobe listened. In my opinion, worth the upgrade price alone. (Literally, because spelling errors are generally nonbillable). |
| Free Transform | This tool does it all. Access every layer transformation by Ctrl +clicking (right-clicking) while in free transform mode. Cut downs on image degradation by applying all your sizing, warping, and perspective changes at once. Cmd+T (Ctrl+T) |
| Purge | Free up space by deleting undos, clipboards, history! This will enable you to save and close when you get the dreaded “Scratch Disks Are Full” message. |
| Layer Menu | |
| Group and Ungroup | Similar to using a track matte. Apply a layer to its downstairs neighbor, but only in areas where there is opacity. This is often used to constrain a fill layer to a lower text layer for a Paste Into effect. It is also used internally by many layer styles to create proper clipping for bevel effects. Group: Cmd+G (Ctrl+G) Ungroup: Cmd+Shift+G (Ctrl+Shift+G) |
| Arrange Layers | You can move layers around from the keyboard. |
| Bring to Front | Cmd+Shift+[(Ctrl+Shift+[) |
| Bring Forward | Cmd+[(Ctrl+[) |
| Send Backward | Cmd+] (Ctrl+]) |
| Send to Back | Cmd+Shift+] (Ctrl+Shift+]) |
| Align Linked and Distribute Linked | Because your eyes aren’t that good. Link the layers together and access these controls from the menu (or use the Move tool and Options bar for a graphical interface). Want something centered on the screen? Link to the background layer and highlight it. The highlighted layer is the basis for all centering and distribution. |

Overlooked Commands (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|--|--|
| Select Menu | |
| Reselect | Brings back the last selection made, even if it was a long time ago. (Shift+Cmd+D/Shift+Ctl+D) |
| Feather | Proper feathering is the difference between good glows and shadows and bad ones. It is also a critical step when creating masks and alpha channels. Use this method to feather <i>after</i> you have made a selection. Several tools have their own feathering which can be applied from the Options bar. Cmd+Option+D (Ctrl+Alt+D) |
| Select Color Range | This tool uses an interface similar to After Effects Linear Color Key effect. Use the Eyedropper to click on the color you want to select, then add or subtract with the Plus and Minus Eyedroppers . You can smooth your selection out using the Fuzziness slider. This powerful selection tool does not get enough use. |
| View Menu | |
| Zoom In | Cmd++ (Ctrl++) |
| Zoom Out | Cmd+- (Ctrl+-) |
| Fit On Screen | Cmd+0 (Ctrl+0) |
| Show Actual Pixels | Cmd+Option+0 (Ctrl+Alt+0) |
| Show | Hide selections and guides. Very useful to see your work and nothing else. By the way, slices are for the web. If you see annoying white numbers in the corner of your document, you've turned slices on accidentally (by selecting the Slice tool, for example). Get rid of them by accessing View>Show>Slices and unchecking it. To hide all, press Cmd+H (Ctrl+H) |
| Snap | Use those guides for something useful. Objects will snap to position as you drag them near a guide. (Shift+Cmd+;/Shift+Ctrl+;) |
| New Guide | A more precise way to add guides to your project. Choose View>New Guide and specify an exact location. |
| Window Menu | |
| Cycle through open windows | Ctrl+Tab |
| Hide Tools | Tab |
| Steal Attributes for New Image Size or Canvas Size | This one is tricky. By default, Photoshop offers to make a new document from the size of the image on your clipboard. You can choose from more options, however. First, make a new window. Before clicking OK for the size, access the Window menu. You can now select from any open document in the list. |

Overlooked Commands (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|-----------------|------------------|
|-----------------|------------------|

Help Menu

There is no shame in using the Help menu. It's all there (at least the dryly written official answer). The Help menu allows you to keep the users manual in a quick access format (it uses a standard web browser).

| | |
|--------------|--|
| System Info | You'll need this when calling tech support. It's also a great way to call up a list of all your filters so that you can check on manufacturer's web sites for updates. |
| Adobe Online | Get updates and news on your favorite products. You can access software updates directly. |

Full Screen Modes

One picture at a time, please! Cutting down on clutter can be tough with all of Photoshop's floating palettes and open windows. Fortunately, there are two full-screen modes that help you isolate your active window. You can cycle through these by pressing the F key. If you'd like to apply a full-screen mode to all open documents, Shift+click on the corresponding icon.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Full Screen Mode With Menu Bar | This mode puts you into a windows-like environment where the active window blocks the others out. The area outside your image is filled with gray, and scroll bars disappear. You can cycle to other windows by pressing Ctrl+Tab or selecting the item from the Window menu. |
| Full Screen Mode | This mode blacks out the background and loses the menu bars. To complement this environment, press the Tab key to hide all of your palettes, and press Cmd+0 (Ctrl+0) to zoom your image to full screen. This mode works well for reviewing and approving images. The Ctrl+Tab shortcut will work here as well to cycle through open windows. |

Shortcuts

There are many valuable shortcuts when it comes to layers. Think of the **Layers** palette as your timeline, and you will grasp the importance of mastering these. And remember, you can activate multiple visibility and link switches by clicking on one then dragging through the other layers in the palette.

Layer Shortcuts

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Load a Layer | Cmd+click (Ctrl+click) on layer icon |
| Add to Loaded Layer selection | Shift+Cmd+click (Shift+Ctrl+click) on other layer icons |
| Subtract to Loaded Layer selection | Cmd+Option+click on other layer icons Ctrl+Alt+click on other layer icons |
| Activate Layers palette | F7 |
| New Layer | Cmd+Shift+N (Ctrl+Shift+N) or Click on New Layer button |
| New Layer via Copy | Cmd+J (Ctrl+J)(must have item selected) |
| New Layer via Cut | Cmd+Shift+J (Ctrl+Shift+J) (must have item selected) |
| Duplicate Layer | Cmd+J (Ctrl+J) or Drag Layer to the New Layer Button |
| Delete a Layer | Click Delete Layer Button or Drag Layer to the Delete Layer Button |
| Delete Multiple Layers | Step 1 Link them together. Step 2 Cmd+click (Ctrl+click) on the Trash icon in the Layers palette. |
| Solo a Layer | Option+click (Alt+click)on Eye icon |
| Activate Next Visible Layer | Option+] (Alt +)] |
| Activate Previous Visible Layer | Option+[Alt+)] |
| Activate Top Layer | Option+Shift +] (Alt+Shift +)] |
| Activate Bottom Layer | Option+Shift+[(Alt+Shift+[)] |
| Move a Layer Up One Position | Cmd+] (Ctrl +)] |
| Move a Layer Down One Position | Cmd+[(Ctrl +)] |
| Move a Layer to Top | Cmd+Shift +] (Ctrl+Shift +)] |
| Move a Layer to Bottom | Cmd+Shift+[(Ctrl+Shift +)] |

Layer Shortcuts (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Change Opacity by 10% increments | Type a single number (i.e., 3 = 30%) |
| Change Opacity by 1% increments | Type two numbers quickly (i.e., 67 = 67%) |
| Cycle through Blend Modes | (must have tool selected <i>without</i> blending modes) |
| Cycle to Next Blend Mode | Shift++ (plus) |
| Cycle to Previous Blend Mode | Shift+- (minus) |
| Convert a Background Layer | Double-click on icon and rename |
| Group Layer | Option+G (Alt+G) Option+click (Alt+click) between layers |
| Ungroup Layer | Cmd+Shift+G (Ctrl+Shift+G) Option+click (Alt+click) between layers |
| Merge Active layer Down | Cmd+E (Ctrl+E) |
| Merge to Target Layer | Link desired layers to target, choose Merge Linked from submenu of Layers palette |
| Merge to Target and Preserve Layers | Step 1 Create new target layer. Step 2 Link desired layers to new target. Step 3 Hold down Option (Alt) key and choose Merge Linked from submenu of Layers palette. |
| Toggle Layer Mask Off/On | Shift+click on Layer Mask thumbnail |
| Toggle Layer Mask and composite | Option+click (Alt+click) on Layer Mask thumbnail |
| Turn on alpha channel | \ (toggles rubylith mask off/on) |
| Make Layer Active | Cmd+~ (Ctrl+~) Click on layer thumbnail |
| Modify Layer Mask View | Double-click on Layer Mask icon |

NOTE: Holding down the **Shift** key while changing a type layer's attributes in the **Character** or **Paragraph** palette will change the same attribute on all linked layers.

Type Shortcuts

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Enter Edit Mode | Double-click on T icon in layer palette |
| Reposition Type without exiting | Hold down Cmd (Ctrl) and move with mouse |
| Toggle Eyedropper | Option (Alt) |
| Select a Word | Double-click on word |
| Select a Line | Triple-click on word |
| Select a Paragraph | Quadruple-click on word |
| Select All | Cmd+A (Ctrl+A) |
| Cycle through fonts | Click in Type field in Options bar and use up and down arrows to select font |
| Adjust point size | Click in Point Size field in Options bar and use up and down arrows to adjust size |
| Adjust point size of selection | Cmd+Shift+< or > Ctrl+Shift+< or > |
| Hide “reversed out” selection | Cmd+H (Ctrl+H) |
| Create new type layer | Shift+click with Type tool to create a new type layer (if you’re close to another type block) |
| Toggle Hyphenation | Cmd+Option+Shift+H (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+H) |

Kerning Shortcuts (place cursor between characters)

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Increase by 2/100 Em Space | Option+right arrow (Alt+right arrow) |
| Decrease by 2/100 Em Space | Option+left arrow (Alt+left arrow) |
| Increase by 10/100 Em Space | Cmd+Option+right arrow (Ctrl+Alt+right arrow) |
| Decrease by 10/100 Em Space | Cmd+Option+left arrow (Ctrl+Alt+left arrow) |

Leading Adjustment Shortcuts (must highlight text)

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Increase by 2 points | Option+down arrow (Alt+down arrow) |
| Decrease by 2 points | Option+up arrow (Alt+up arrow) |
| Increase by 10 points | Cmd+Option+down arrow (Ctrl+Alt+down arrow) |
| Decrease by 10 points | Cmd+Option+up arrow (Ctrl+Alt+up arrow) |
| Select Auto Leading | Cmd+Option+Shift+A (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+A) |

History Palette Shortcuts

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <i>Redo Key Option 1</i> | (Cmd+Z)/(Ctrl+Z) |
| Toggles Undo/Redo | Cmd+Z (Ctrl+Z) |
| History State Backward | Cmd+Option+Z (Ctrl+Alt+Z) |
| History State Forward | Cmd+Shift+Z (Ctrl+Shift+Z) |
| <i>Redo Key Option 2</i> | (Cmd+Shift+Z)/(Ctrl+Shift+Z) |
| Toggles Undo/Redo | Cmd+Option+Z (Ctrl+Alt+Z) |
| History State Backward | Cmd+Z (Ctrl+Z) |
| History State Forward | Cmd+Shift+Z (Ctrl+Shift+Z) |
| <i>Redo Key Option 3</i> | (Cmd+Y)/(Ctrl+Y) |
| Toggles Undo/Redo | Cmd+Option+Z (Ctrl+Alt+Z) |
| History State Backward | Cmd+Z (Ctrl+Z) |
| History State Forward | Cmd+Y (Ctrl+Y) |

Filter Shortcuts

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Extract | Filter>Extract Cmd+Option+X (Ctrl+Alt+X) |
| Repeat last filter | Cmd+F (Ctrl+F) |
| Reopen last filter with same settings | Cmd+Option+F (Ctrl+Alt+F) |
| Fade last filter | Cmd+Shift+F (Ctrl+Shift+F) |
| Cycle Through Gradients | Previous, (comma)/Next. (period) |
| Default Colors | D |
| Toggle Foreground/Background | X |

Lighting Effects Filter

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Duplicate light | Option+drag light (Alt+drag light) |
| Delete Light | Delete |
| Adjust light footprint w/o changing angle | Shift+drag handle |
| Adjust light Angle w/o changing footprint | Cmd+drag handle (Ctrl+drag handle) |

Filter Shortcuts (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|------------------------------|--|
| Retouching Tools | |
| Toggle Blur and Sharpen | Hold down Option (Alt) while using one of these tools |
| Toggle Fingerpainting Smudge | Hold down Option (Alt) while using the Smudge tool |
| Toggle Dodge and Burn | Hold down Option (Alt) while using one of these tools |
| Switch Modes while Toning | Shadows: Option (Alt)+Shift+S Midtones: Option (Alt)+Shift+M Highlights: Option (Alt)+Shift+H Cycle: Shift++ or Shift+- |
| Set the Sponge tool | Desaturate: Option (Alt)+Shift+D Saturate: Option (Alt)+Shift+S Cycle: Shift++ or Shift+- |

Selection Shortcuts

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Add to a selection | Shift+Selection tool |
| Subtract from a selection | Option+Selection tool (Alt+Selection tool) |
| Create intersection selection | Shift+Option+tool (Shift+Alt+tool) |
| Select All | Cmd+A (Ctrl+A) |
| Deselect | Cmd+D (Ctrl+D) |
| Reselect last selection | Cmd+Shift+D (Ctrl+Shift+D) |
| Inverse selection | Cmd+Shift+I (Ctrl+Shift+I) |
| Hide Marching Ants | Cmd+H (Ctrl+H) |
| Use Move tool temporarily | Hold down the Cmd (Ctrl) key to temporarily switch (Except with vector tools) |
| Use Hand tool temporarily | Hold down the spacebar |
| Feather | Cmd+Option+D (Ctrl+Alt+D) |
| Load a Layer | Cmd+click (Ctrl+click) on a layer |
| Add to Loaded Layer | Cmd+Shift+click (Ctrl+Shift+click) on a layer |
| Subtract From Loaded Layer | Cmd+Option+click (Ctrl+Alt+click) on a layer |
| Intersect From Loaded Layer | Cmd+Option+Shift+click (Ctrl+Alt+click) on a layer |

Selection Shortcuts (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Load a Channel | Cmd+Option (Ctrl+Alt) and the channel number Cmd+click (Ctrl+click) on the Channel icon |
| Constrain Marquee | Shift+drag with initial selection |
| Draw from Center with Marquee | Option+drag (Alt+drag) with Elliptical Marquee |
| Reposition Selection as it's drawn | Hold down spacebar |
| Move Selection 1 pixel | Arrow keys when Marquee/Lasso/Wand selected |
| Move Selection 10 pixels | Shift +arrow keys when Marquee/Lasso/Wand selected |
| Move Selected Pixels 1 pixel | Switch to Move tool; then use arrow keys |
| Move Selected Pixels 10 pixels | Switch to Move tool; then use Shift+arrow keys |
| Center selection in new document | Shift+drag selection to new document |
| Lasso Tool | |
| Activate Lasso tool | L |
| Toggle Lasso tools midselection | Hold down the Option (Alt) key and drag |
| Close Selection | Double-click or press Enter |
| Cancel | Escape |

Levels, Curves, and Color Shortcuts

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|------------------------------|---|
| Levels | |
| Levels | Cmd+L (Ctrl+L) |
| Use Last Levels Settings | Cmd+Option+L (Ctrl+ Alt+L) |
| Auto Levels | Cmd+Shift+L (Ctrl+Shift+L) |
| Auto Contrast | Cmd+Option+Shift+L (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+L) |
| Curves | |
| Curves | Cmd+M (Ctrl+M) |
| Use Last Curves Settings | Cmd+Option+M (Ctrl+Alt+M) |
| Pinpoint Color on Curve | Cmd+click (Ctrl+click) in image |
| Pinpoint Color on Each Curve | Cmd+Shift+click (Ctrl+Shift+click) in image |

Levels, Curves, and Color Shortcuts (continued)

| Command: | Shortcut: |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Color</i> | |
| Color Balance | Cmd+B (Ctrl+B) |
| Use Last Color Balance Settings | Cmd+Option+B (Ctrl+ Alt+B) |
| Auto Color | Cmd+Shift+B (Ctrl+Shift+B) |
| Hue/Saturation | Cmd+U (Ctrl+U) |
| Use Last Hue/Saturation Settings | Cmd+Option+U (Ctrl+ Alt+U) |
| Desaturate Image | Cmd+Shift+U (Ctrl+Shift+U) |
| Invert | Cmd+I (Ctrl+I) |

