



Customizing Photoshop

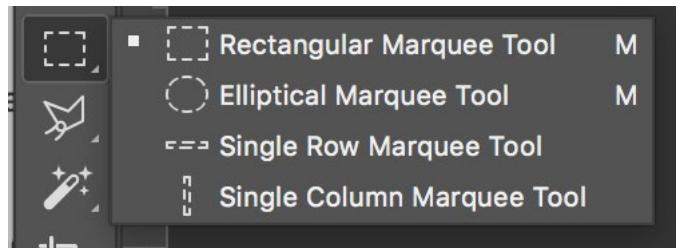
Customizing Photoshop

There are many different ways of customizing the Photoshop interface to best suit your specific needs. You can decide what options appear in the menus, what tools are included within the Tool Bar, what your panel configuration will look like, etc. In this lesson, we're going to look at the various ways you can set up Photoshop for your workflow.

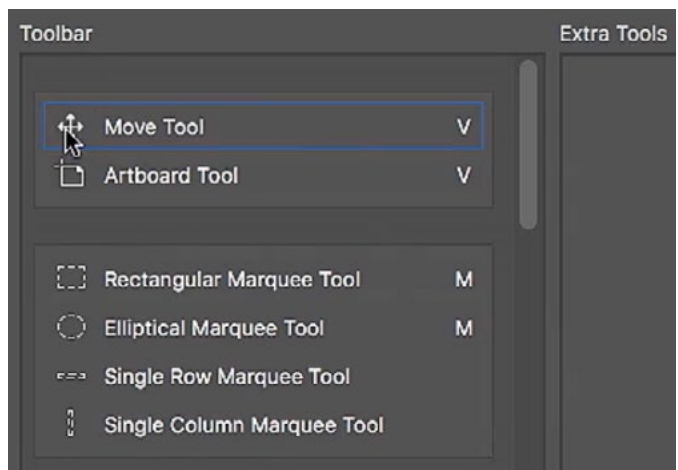
The Toolbar

The Toolbar is located by default on the very left side of the Photoshop interface and contains many tools used in working with your images. To customize the Toolbar, go to the main menu at the top of the interface and choose Edit > Toolbar. A dialog box will appear and on the left side, there is a list of all the tools. In the actual Toolbar, some of the tools are hidden behind other tools. If you click and hold on one of the tool icons, a menu will appear that contains all of the tools hidden beneath that tool icon. In the list of tools on the left side of the Customize Toolbar dialog, all of the tools are listed, including the hidden ones. To the right of the tool's name, you'll find the keyboard shortcut that can be used for quickly accessing the tool.

Using this tool list, you can decide to hide any tools that you never use. For example, I hide the 3D Material Drop

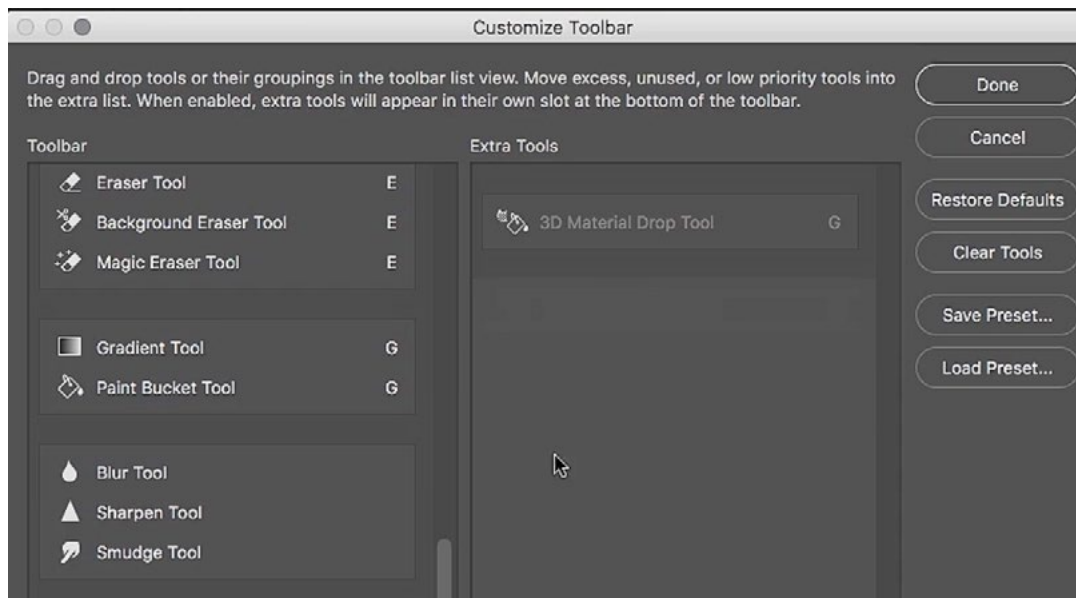


In the Toolbar on the left side of the interface, the tools are grouped together, with only one tool per group appearing as an icon. Click and hold on an icon to reveal the other tools in the same group.



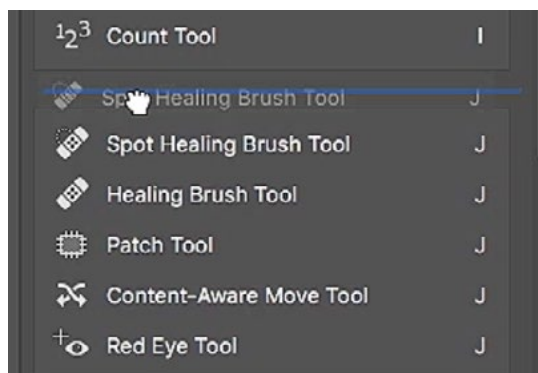
All of Photoshop's tools are listed within the Customize Toolbar dialog and they are organized into the groups they appear in within the Toolbar. To the right of a tool's name is its keyboard shortcut.

Tool because I rarely work with 3D images and I don't want something I never use cluttering up my Toolbar. To remove a tool from the Toolbar, simply drag it to the "Extra Tools" area on the right side of the dialog box.



Here, I decided to hide the 3D Material Drop Tool so that it no longer appears within my Toolbar. I hid the tool by dragging it from the tool list on the left into the Extra Tools area on the right.

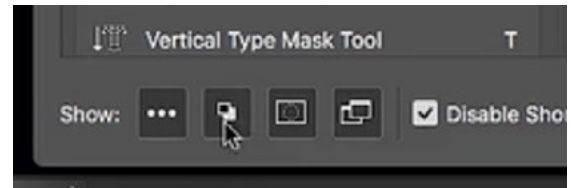
Customize a tool's keyboard shortcut As we mentioned above, the keyboard shortcut for a tool will be listed to the right of the tool's name in the Customize Toolbar dialog. If you would like to change the keyboard shortcut to something you'll more easily remember, click on the name of the tool and the shortcut will automatically become highlighted. Then you can enter in a new shortcut.



Here, we're ungrouping a tool from its group by dragging it out of the group within the Customize Toolbar dialog.

Ungroup a tool The tools are organized into groups within the Toolbar so the icon of one tool in the group is visible and the rest are hidden behind it. You need to click and hold on the icon to reveal all of the tools in the group. To remove a tool from the group it's in, click on the name of the tool in the Customize Toolbar dialog and drag it out of its group so it appears in its own slot.

At the bottom of the Customize Toolbar dialog, there is a “Disable Shortcuts for Hidden Toolbar Extras” check box. If you turn this on, the keyboard shortcuts for any hidden tools (the ones you placed in the Extra Tools section) will not work. There are also a series of icons at the bottom of this dialog and these let you decide whether certain items appear in your Toolbar. These include the foreground and background color swatches, the Quick Mask Mode icon, and the toggle Full Screen Modes icon.



The icons at the bottom of the Customize Toolbar dialog allow you to hide the various features that appear by default at the bottom of the Toolbar.

Tool Keyboard Shortcuts I Don't Use and Therefore Re-assign:

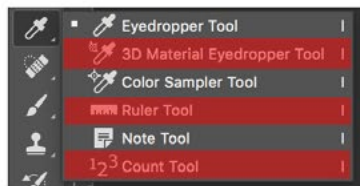
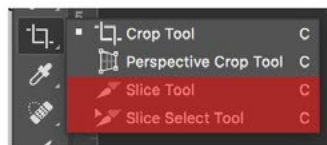
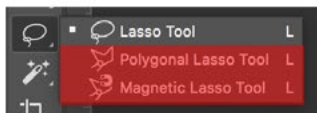
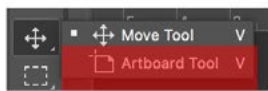
- K (unused by Photoshop)
- N (unused by Photoshop)
- O=dodge/burn/sponge
- U=Shape Tools
- H=Hand Tool (Note: I use spacebar, but you'll disable Birdseye view H-clicking)
- R=Rotate View Tool (I never use)

Tools I might Consider Applying Custom Shortcuts to:

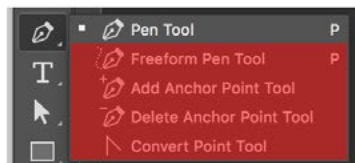
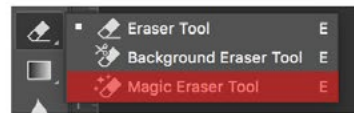
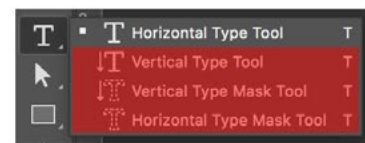
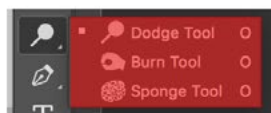
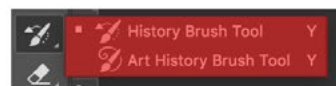
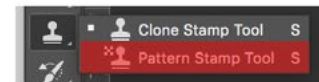
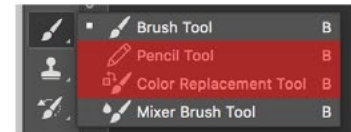
- Healing Brush
- Pressure Controls Opacity (for graphics tablet)
- Background Eraser Tool
- Targeted Adjustment Tool (used in adjustments)

Below is a visual list of tools I usually hide or rearrange. The tools highlighted in red are the tools I hide because I rarely or never use them. The tools highlighted in blue are the ones I rearrange.

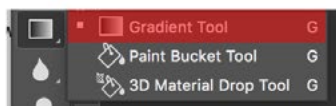
Tools I Hide or Rearrange



Move Healing Brush to its own slot

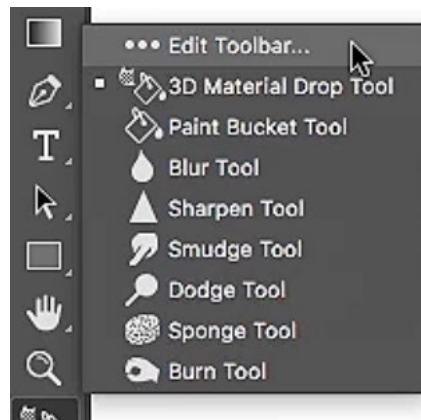


Move to Pen Tool



Don't hide the Hand Tool. Otherwise, you can't double-click to fit in window.

Accessing hidden tools When you hide a tool (or tools) from your Toolbar, know that you will still have access to those tools. At the bottom of the Toolbar, there is an icon that looks like three little dots (see screen shot). Click and hold on that icon and you'll get a menu containing all of the tools you've hidden.

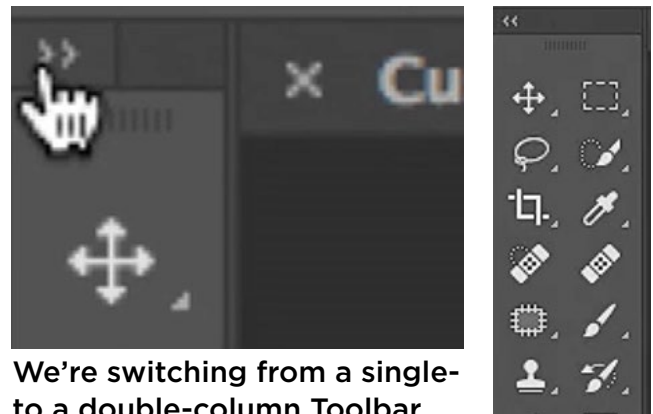


Click the icon that looks like three little dots in order to access all the tools you've hidden from your Toolbar.

Toolbar Tips

Single-column vs. double-column Toolbar

By default, the Toolbar is a single column on the left side of the screen. If you would like the Toolbar to occupy two columns instead of one, click on the little double arrow icon at the very top of the Toolbar. Click on the icon again to return to the single-column view.



We're switching from a single-column to a double-column Toolbar.

Bird's eye view If you're ever zoomed way in on your image and want to see the full view of the picture, press and hold on the H key (the keyboard shortcut for the Hand Tool) and then click and hold with your mouse to get a zoomed-out view of the entire picture. This is called bird's eye view. When you release the mouse button, the view will become zoomed in again. When you temporarily zoom out on your image using this technique, there will be a highlighted rectangle on your image, which represents the area you were zoomed in on. If you drag your mouse to reposition this rectangle, the image will zoom in to that new location when you release the mouse button.

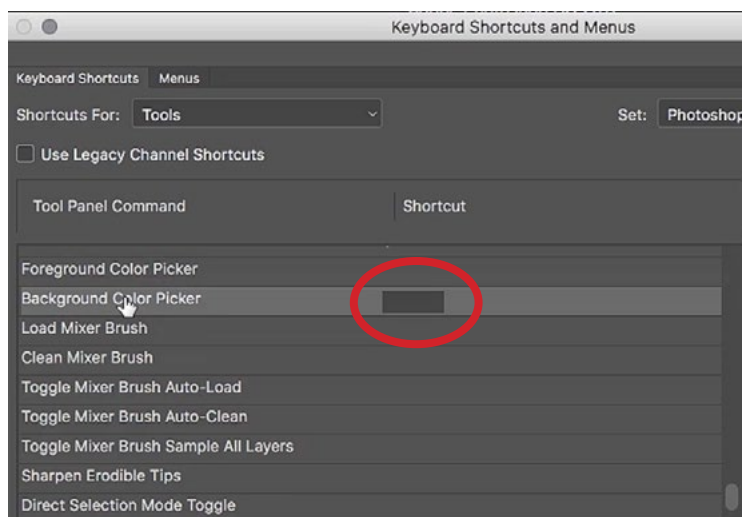
Temporarily access a tool In the tip above, we mentioned that you can hold down the H key to temporarily access the Hand Tool. Know that this technique works with any of the tools that have keyboard shortcuts. When you press and hold on the shortcut key, you will temporarily access the tool until you release the key again. If you simply tap on a shortcut key, the tool will become active and it will stay active.

The two tools I access the most via the “press-and-hold” method are the Eyedropper Tool and the Move Tool. I’ll press and hold the I key to temporarily access the Eyedropper Tool so that I can sample a color from within the image.

I’ll often times press and hold the V key to temporarily access the Move Tool. This can be convenient when I need to reposition a guide that is on my document. Note that holding down the Command key (Ctrl on Win) will also temporarily access the Move Tool.

Assign keyboard shortcuts There are some tools that do not have a keyboard shortcut assigned and when you go to the Customize Toolbar dialog, there is no option for adding one. An example would be the command for setting your foreground color. The Customize Toolbar dialog does not allow you to assign a shortcut for this command. Whenever this is the case, know that there is another

way you can assign a shortcut and that is by going to the Edit menu and choosing Keyboard Shortcuts. When the dialog appears, change the “Shortcuts For” menu to Tools. Then, scroll down the list of tools until you find the tool or command you want to set a shortcut for. I chose Foreground Color Picker. When you click on the name of a tool, a text field will appear to the right of it, and this is where you type in your desired shortcut.



In the Keyboard Shortcuts dialog, we clicked on the name of a tool in order to access the text field to type in a new keyboard shortcut.

Edit Application Menus

The same dialog we used in the tip above can be used to customize the Application Menus, which are the menus that appear along the top of the interface. In that Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus dialog box (accessed by going to the Edit menu and choosing Keyboard Shortcuts OR Menus), click on the Menus tab at the very top



To customize the Photoshop Application Menus, make sure the Menus tab is active within the Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus dialog. Then, use the “Menu For” menu to choose Application Menus.

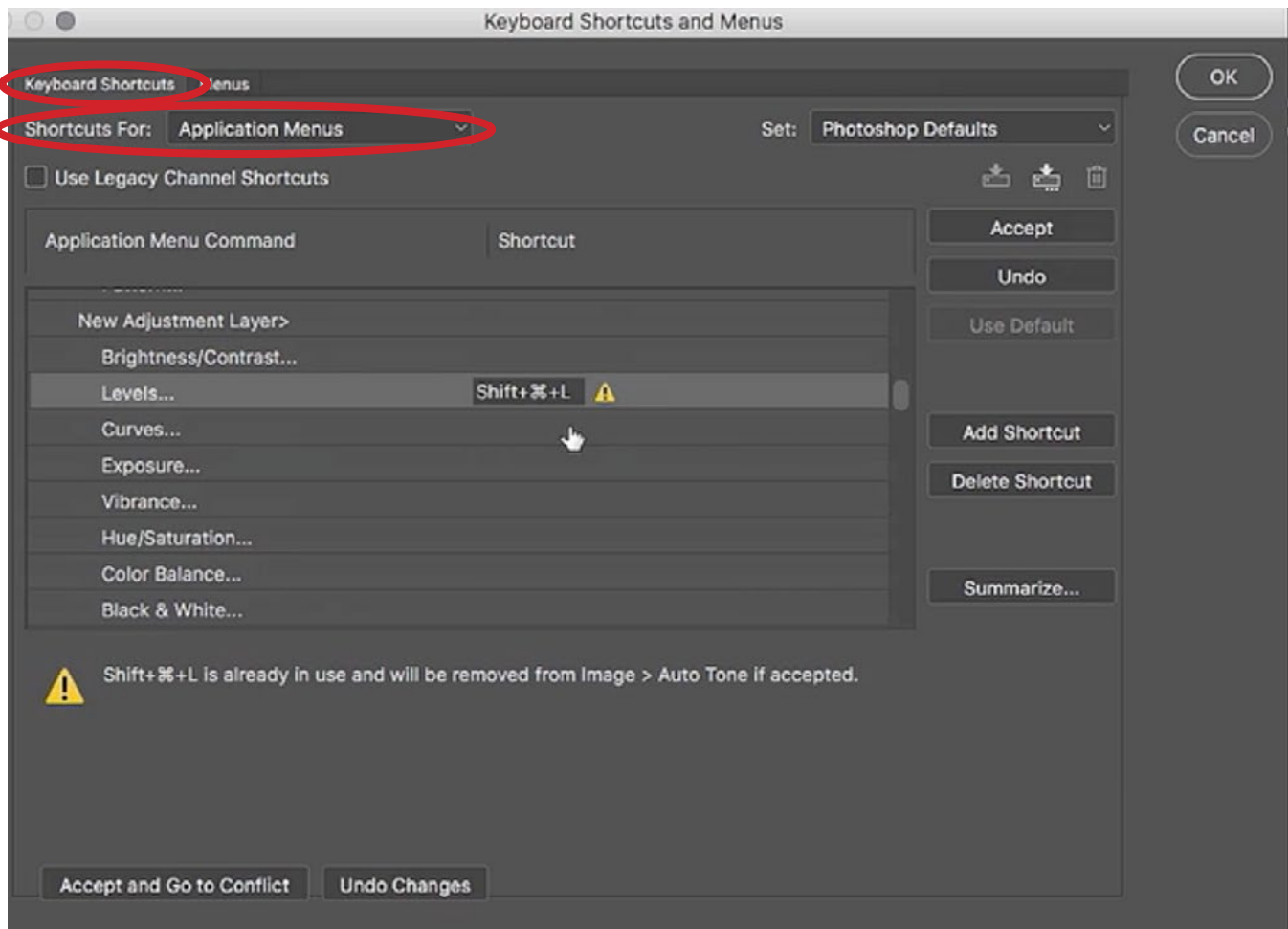
You will see a list of all the menus that span along the top of the interface. Click on a menu option and it will expand to show you all of the items that appear within that menu. To the right of each choice is an eyeball icon. If you would like to hide any of the menu options so that they don't appear in your menu, click on the eyeball icon to turn off its visibility. This allows you to clean up the menus in your interface

Application Menu Command	Visibility	Color
Blur More	<input type="checkbox"/>	None
Box Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	None
Gaussian Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	Red
Lens Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	None
Motion Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	None
Radial Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	None
Shape Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	None
Smart Blur...	<input type="checkbox"/>	None

Click on the eyeball icon to the right of a menu item to hide the item from the Photoshop menu. Click on the field to the right of the eyeball icon in order to assign a color to the menu item.

so they only display the options you use. You can also assign a color to your menu items by clicking on the color field to the right of the menu option's name within the Menus dialog. I use this feature to assign colors to the menu options I use the most so they really stand out and are easy to spot.

Assign shortcuts to menu items To assign keyboard shortcuts to different menu items, click on the Keyboard Shortcuts tab at the very top of the Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus dialog box and make sure the “Shortcuts For” menu is set to Application Menus. Then, you can scroll down the list of menu items and enter in a custom shortcut to the right of a menu option’s name. If you enter a shortcut that is already used for another Photoshop command, you’ll see a warning symbol appear letting you know that the shortcut will be removed from that other command if you continue.



Here, we’re assigning a keyboard shortcut to a specific menu item. We clicked on the Keyboard Shortcuts tab at the very top of the dialog and then chose the Application Menus option from the “Shortcuts For” menu.

Below are a couple of lists that show what changes I usually make to my menus and what keyboard shortcuts I custom-create for my Photoshop commands.

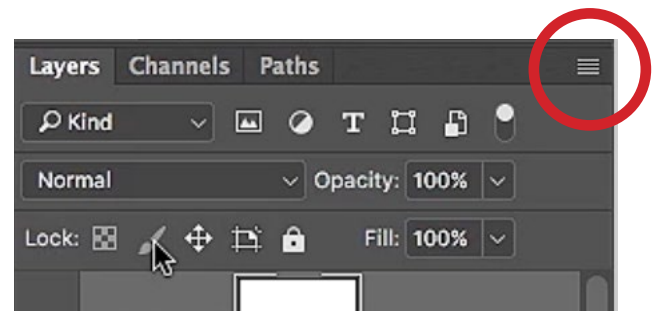
Application Menu Changes

- **Remove Command-Q from Photoshop>Quit to prevent accidental quitting of PS**
- **Assign Shortcuts for Adjustment Layers:**
 - Shortcut = Old Use = New Use
 - Shift-Command-U = Desaturate = Hue/Sat Adj Lyr
 - Shift-Command-M = Record Measurements = Curves Adj Lyr
 - Shift-Command-L = Auto Tone =Levels Adj Lyr
 - Shift-Command-B= Auto Color = Color Balance Adj Lyr
- **Layer>Layer Mask>Delete=Control-Command-M**
- **Layer>Layer Mask>Enable/Disable Mask =Ctrl-Opt-Cmd-M**
- **Select>Transform Selection=Option-Command-Control-T**
- **Select>Load Selection=Control-Command-L**
- **Select>Save Selection=Control-Command-S**
- **Layer>Smart Objects>Convert to Smart Object=Control-Command-O**
- **Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur=Control-Command-B**
- **Window>Arrange>Tile=Control-Command-W**
- **Window>Arrange>Consolidate All to Tabs=Control-Command-C**
- **Window>Workspace> your most used =Control-Option-Command-1-9**

How to access hidden menu items When you hide an item from one of your application menus, it doesn't mean that you can no longer access the command. If you would like to access a hidden menu item, scroll to the bottom of the menu it would normally appear in and click on the "Show All Menu Items" option. Alternatively, you can hold down the Command key (Ctrl on Win) as you click on the menu name. This will open the menu in a way that displays ALL of the default menu items, including the ones you've hidden.

Edit Panel Menus

The various Photoshop panels all contain their own menus and you can customize these menus as well. Note that all of Photoshop's panels can be accessed by clicking on the Window menu and choosing the name of the panel. When a panel is expanded, the menu will appear as an icon in the upper right corner of the panel. To customize one of these menus, click on the Edit menu at the top of the interface, choose Menus and make sure the "Menu For" menu is set to Panel Menus. Then, scroll down the list of panels and expand the one you want to customize. Here, you can hide a menu option or assign a color, just like we did with the Application Menus. To assign a custom keyboard shortcut, click on the Keyboard Shortcuts tab at the very top of the dialog and make sure the "Shortcuts For" menu is set to "Panel Menus."



The panel menu can be found in the top right corner of each panel. These individual menus can be customized by using the settings within the Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus dialog.

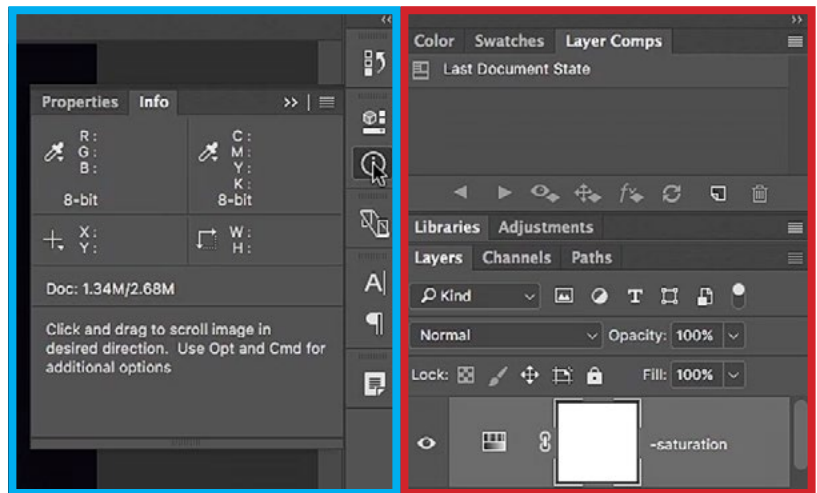
Below is a list of Panel Menu changes I make in my version of Photoshop

Panel Menu Changes

- Clone Source->reset transform = control-option-command-R
- Layer Comps->Next Layer Comp = control-command->
- Layer Comps->Previous Layer Comp = control-command-<
- Layers->Blending Options = control-option-command-B

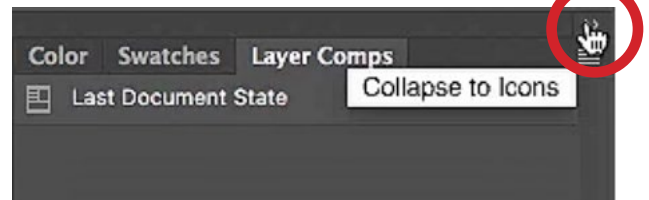
Working with Panels

As we mentioned earlier, you can access any Photoshop panel via the Window menu at the top of the interface. Panels can be displayed in one of two ways within the interface. They can be full-scale with tabs at the top. This is how the Layers panel appears, by default. They can also appear as an icon that you can click on to expand the panel. If you have a full-scale panel and want to convert it into an icon panel, click on the little double-arrow icon in the top right corner of the panel. Note that if there are any other panel tabs grouped with that

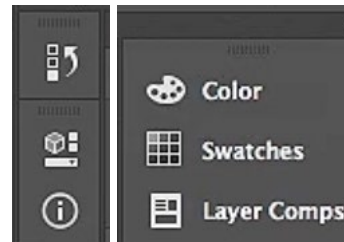


Photoshop's panels can be viewed as full-scale panels, like the ones highlighted in red, or as icon panels (highlighted in blue) where you click on an icon to expand the panel.

panel, they will also convert to the icon view. Click on that same little double-arrow icon to convert it back to a full-scale panel. When viewing a set of panels in the icon view, you can drag the side of the panel out so that the panel becomes wider and includes text that describes what the panel is. I keep my most-used panels in the full-scale view and then take the panels I use less frequently and group them together in the icon view so that I can expand them only when needed.

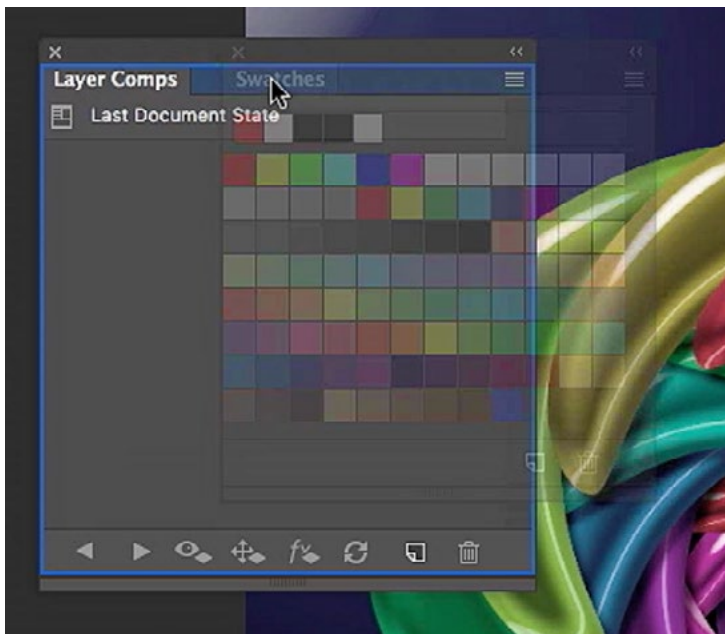


Click on the little double arrow icon (>>) to switch between the full scale view and the icon view.



Dragging out the side of the icon panels will expand them to show their name as well.

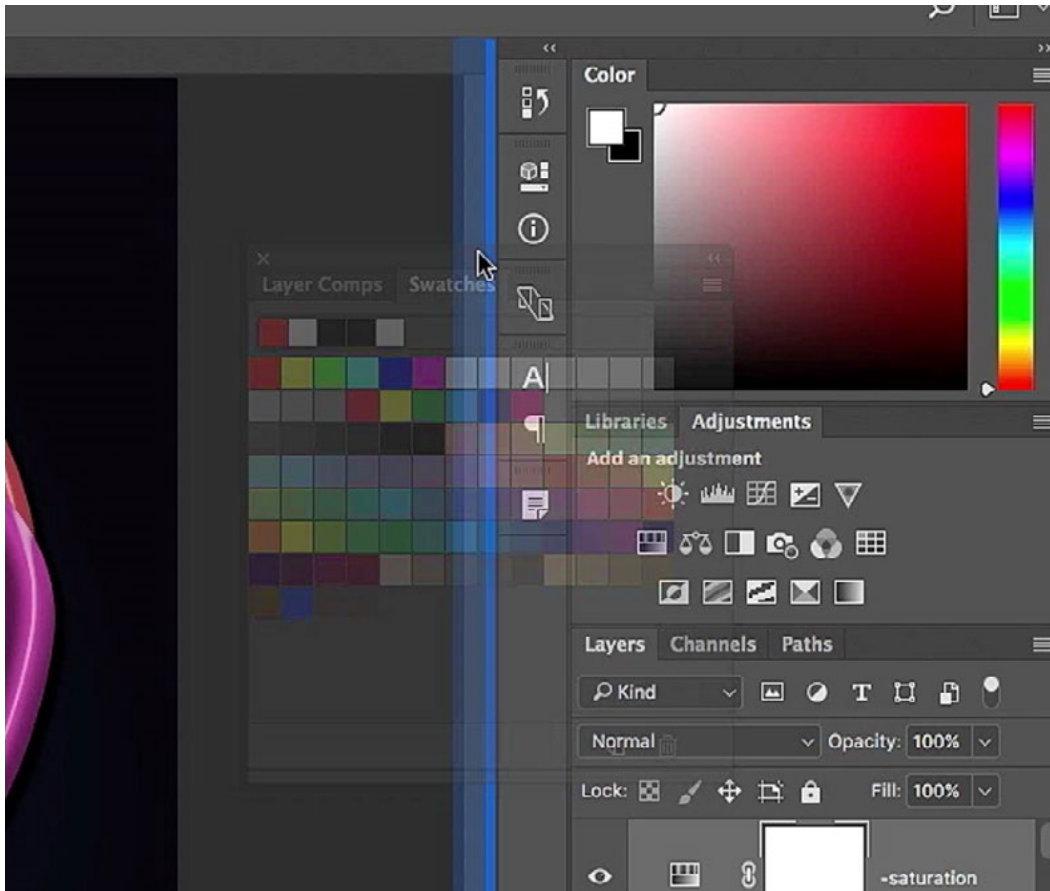
Auto-Collapse Iconic Panels You can set up the iconic panels to auto-collapse when you click away from them. To do this, access the Preferences dialog via the Photoshop menu (It will be under the Edit menu on Win) and click on the Workspace category. There, turn on the “Auto-Collapse Iconic Panels” check box and click OK.



Drag a panel’s tab to change its position. A blue highlight will appear, showing you where the panel will become docked when you release the mouse button.

Arranging panels You can rearrange the panels within the interface by clicking and dragging on the tab that contains the panel’s name or icon. If you drag it out into an empty area of the interface, it will become a free-floating panel. If you drag it within another grouping of panels, you’ll see a blue highlight appear, showing you the location the panel will become docked if you release the mouse button. If you’d like to move an entire group of panels, click and drag on the gray bar that runs above the panel tabs. If you would

like a group of panels to become anchored to the side of your screen, drag the set of panels near the edge of the interface until you see a vertical blue bar become highlighted. This blue bar shows you where the panel set will be anchored when you release the mouse button.



To move a group of panels, click and drag on the gray bar above the panel tabs. When you position the grouping next to a dividing bar on the interface, a blue highlight will appear, indicating that the panel grouping will be docked there if you release the mouse button.

Closing a panel When you have a single, free-floating panel, you can close the panel by clicking the little X icon in the top right corner. If, however, the panel is grouped with other panels, you can only close it by clicking on the menu in the top right corner of the panel set and choosing Close from the menu that appears. This will close the panel that was currently visible in that panel grouping. If you instead chose the Close Tab Group from that menu, all of the panels in that grouping will be closed.

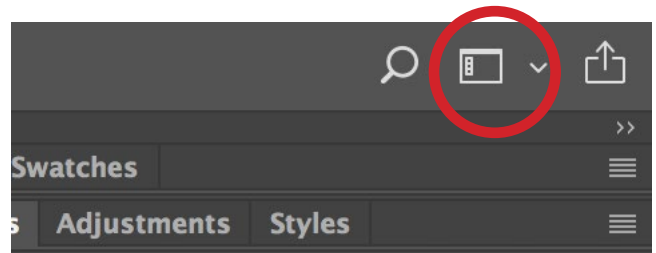
Expanding and contracting panels Double-click on the tab containing the panel name to collapse it. This will cause it to take up much less space in your interface. Double-click on the name again in order to expand it. You can also drag the sides of panels to determine how big or small the panel should be.

Hide panels At any time, you can press the Tab key to hide all of the panels in the Photoshop interface. Press the Tab key again to make them reappear. Hitting Shift+Tab hides everything except for the Toolbar on the left and the Options Bar that runs along the top of the interface.

How to hide other parts of the interface If you scroll down to the bottom of the Window menu, you'll find some extra options for toggling the visibility of parts of the interface. These include the Toolbar and the Options Bar. There is also an option for turning the Application Frame on and off. The Application Frame includes the solid background you would see if you undocked your image tabs from the top of the interface by dragging the tabs into free-floating windows. When you turn the Application Frame off, you would see anything you have running behind Photoshop on your screen.

Workspaces

After you've set up your Photoshop interface the way you like it, you can save all those settings as a workspace. Click on the little menu on the far right side of the Options Bar and the Workspace menu will appear. There are some default workspaces that come with Photoshop, but if you choose the New Workspace option, a dialog will appear. In this New Workspace dialog, you can give the workspace a custom name and use the check boxes to specify whether or not the workspace should include the settings for Keyboard Shortcuts, Menus and the Toolbar. After you save a custom workspace, it will appear within that Workspace menu on the right side of the Options Bar.



The Workspace menu can be found on the far right side of the Options Bar at the top of the screen.