

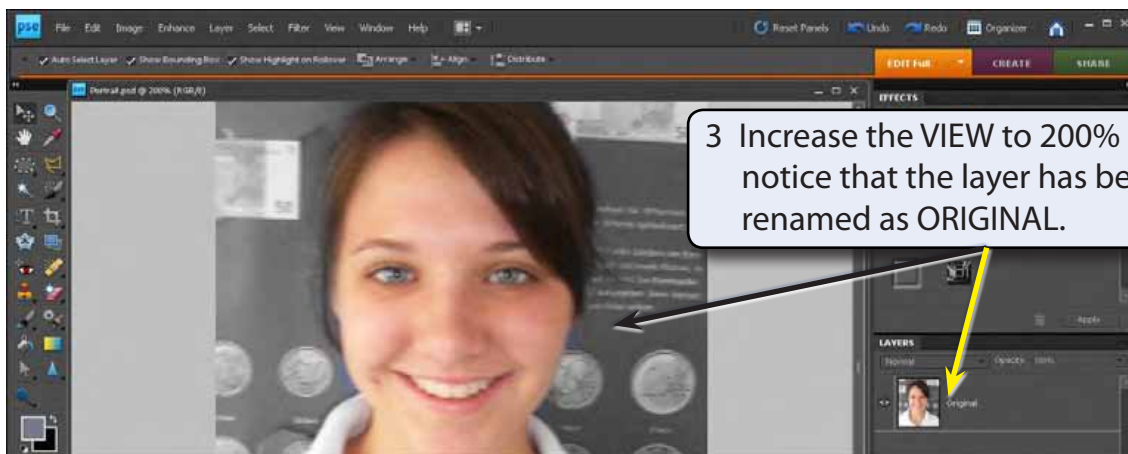
Enhancing Photos of Faces

Cameras do not always do justice to people. Photoshop provides a number of tools to help improve the appearance of faces in photographs. In this Chapter layers will be used to improve the skin tone of a face, highlight the eyes and change the eye colour.

Loading the Image

- 1 Load Photoshop Elements in EDIT MODE or close the current file and select OPEN from the FILE menu.
- 2 Access the PSE8 SUPPORT FILES, open the CHAPTER 17 folder and open the file:

Portrait

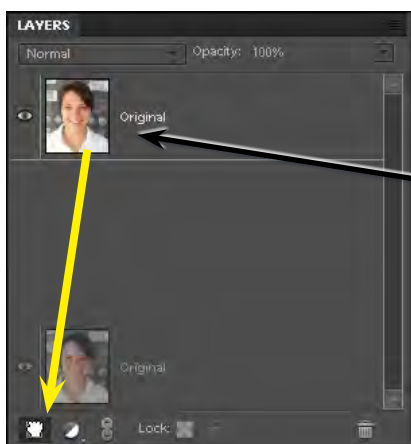


- 4 Look closely at the image, the skin is shiny and a little uneven.

NOTE: A BRIGHTNESS/CONTRAST ADJUSTMENT layer could be used to adjust the skin tone, but in this case a blur will used.

Duplicating the Layer

When changes are needed to be made to the original layer, a duplicate of the layer can be created so that major changes can be made to the copy without affecting the original image.



1 Move the pointer over the ORIGINAL layer thumbnail in the LAYERS panel and drag it over the CREATE A NEW LAYER icon at the base of the panel.

2 A copy of the layer should be produced.

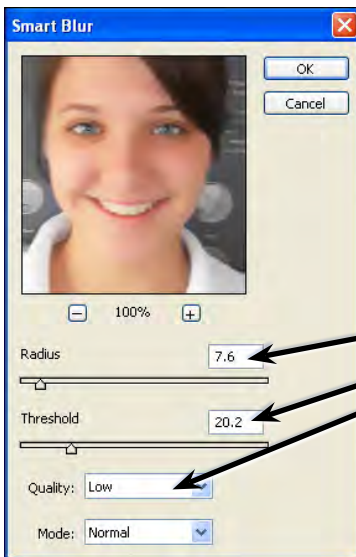


3 Change the name of the new layer to SOFTENED.

Blurring the Image

The duplicated layer will be blurred to give the skin a softer more even look. After this we will sharpen sections of the image such as the eyes.

- 1 The SOFTENED layer should be selected.
- 2 Display the FILTER menu at the top of the screen, highlight BLUR and select SMART BLUR.



3 Set the RADIUS box to about 7.6, the THRESHOLD to about 20 and the QUALITY to LOW to blur the face.

NOTE: The PREVIEW frame can be used to scroll around the picture. Also, with the mouse depressed the original image is displayed. When you release the mouse button the effect of the blur is shown.

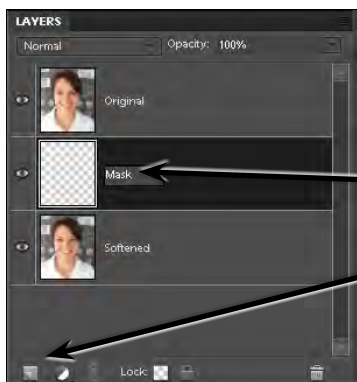
4 Select OK and the tone of the skin should look softer and smoother.

Adding a Mask to the Layer

Parts of the face such as the eyes don't need to be blurred so a mask will be added over the original layer. By doing this we can paint on the mask to display the original eyes, but leave the skin blurred.



1 In the LAYERS panel move the SOFTENED layer below the ORIGINAL layer.

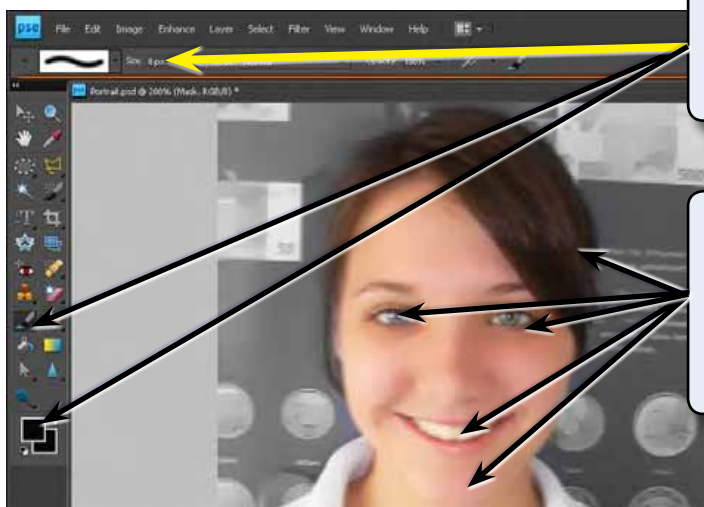


2 With the SOFTENED layer selected, click on the CREATE A NEW LAYER icon at the top of the LAYERS panel to add a blank layer between the two layers, then rename it: MASK



3 Select the ORIGINAL layer then display the LAYER menu and select CREATE CLIPPING MASK (or press CTRL+G or COMMAND+G) so that the ORIGINAL layer is masked by the MASK layer.

Sharpening the Eyes



1 Set the FOREGROUND COLOUR to BLACK, select the BRUSH TOOL and set the BRUSH SIZE to 8 pixels.

2 Select the MASK layer, paint over the eyes, eyebrows, mouth, jaw line and hair, and those parts of the image from the ORIGINAL layer will become visible, hence look a little brighter.

NOTE: By blurring the image we have set the skin tones to look more consistent and then sharpened the import parts of the image.