

Adobe Photoshop Elements 3:  
50 Ways to Create Cool Pictures  
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## Fun With Type, Shapes, and Cookie Cutter Tools in Photoshop Elements 3

Once your photos are picture-perfect—or nearly so—you can become creative with them. This tipsheet shows some of the amazing things that you can add to, or do, with the Type, Shape, and new Cookie Cutter tools in Photoshop Elements 3. The Type tool lets you add text to photos for everything from titles, photo credits, and captions. The Shape tools give you the ability to create and add both geometric and custom shapes. The new Cookie Cutter tool lets you quickly change a photo into a shape that you can further modify using Layer styles.

### Identifying Parts of a Photo with Shapes

Shape tools are great for identifying parts of a photograph. The uses are almost limitless, whether it's showing a specific location on a circuit board for a science project or something silly.

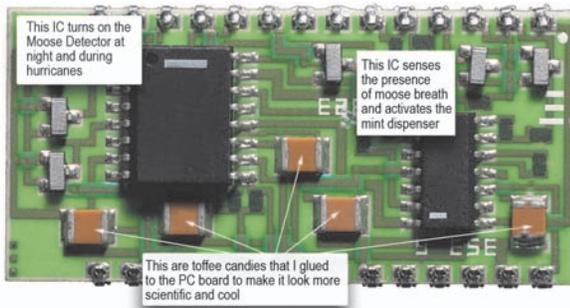


Figure 1. The Shape tools are useful for identifying specific points on an image.

The rectangles in **Figure 1** are made with the Rectangle Shape tool. Making lines with arrowheads is not as obvious. Here is how it's done:

1. Select the **Line shape** tool in the **Shape tool Options** bar.
2. Click the **Geometry Options** button and by checking or unchecking it, you can determine if lines drawn using the Line Shape tool have arrowheads or not.



Figure 2. This is a fun way to make sure viewers see you actually were on vacation.

### Other Ways to Add Text and Shapes into Photos

When making cover or title pages that really get the viewer's attention, you need to get a little creative, and Elements has the tools to let you do just that.

#### Making Titles from the Background

Rather than place text over a photo, you can use the Type Mask tool to create a short title from the background of the photo. Here's how it's done:

1. Download and open the file **CHICAGO.jpg** by going to [www.peachpit.com/50coolways](http://www.peachpit.com/50coolways) and clicking on **Files** under **More Information**.
2. Select the **Horizontal Mask Type** tool. In the **Options** bar select the font **Impact**, change the size to 48 points, and select the **Center** text alignment.
3. Click in the lower-center of the photo, and your entire image will turn red. This is a tint overlay showing the part of the image that is selected.
4. Type in **CHICAGO** (all caps) and it should look something like **Figure 3**. Before you click the **Commit** checkmark, place your cursor outside of the text until the cursor changes to what appears to be an arrowhead with an X. You can now move the selection. Position it so it's centered and slightly above the concrete railing at the bottom of the photo.



Figure 3. The Horizontal Mask Type tool places a red overlay over the entire image.

5. Now for the fun part. Open a Levels Adjustment layer (**Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Levels**). When the New Layer dialog opens, click **OK**.
6. From the Levels dialog, drag the shadow (left) slider of the Output Levels until it reads 175, and the masked text area will appear. Click **OK**, and it's finished.

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## Using the Cookie Cutter Tool

The Cookie Cutter tool is a new addition to Photoshop Elements 3. It is a great tool that scrapbookers will love that is very easy to use. With it you can reshape the borders of any photograph into a custom shape. The tool uses the shapes from the custom shapes we already saw when we looked at the Shapes tools. The difference between the Cookie Cutter and the Custom Shape tool is that the Cookie Cutter turns the photo into the shape of the custom shape. **Figure 4** shows the location of the Cookie Cutter tool and the Options that control how the shape responds when the shape is dragged out.

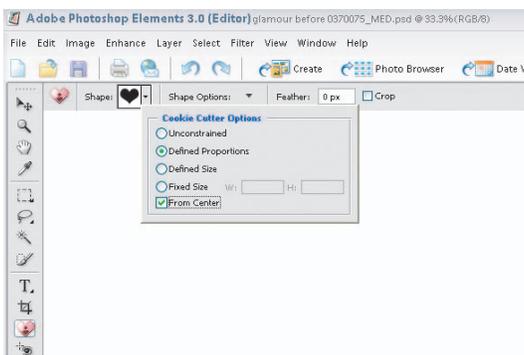


Figure 4. The Cookie Cutter tool cuts shapes out of photos like a cookie cutter.

Here is how the Cookie Cutter tool works:

1. Open a photo.
2. Select the **Cookie Cutter** tool in the **Toolbox** and choose one of the shapes from the **Options** bar. Click and drag the shape over the photo. As soon as the mouse button is released, the area outside of the shape is removed (**Figure 5**). Click the **Commit** checkmark to complete the action.



Figure 5. The heart shape created with the Cookie Cutter tool produces this lovely effect in seconds.



Figure 6. This effect took less than three minutes to create with the Cookie Cutter tool.

3. You can apply **Styles** or any other effect to the shape that is created. In this example, I applied a drop shadow, and the white border around the edge was created using the **Style** named **Heavy**. When you are finished, just flatten the **Layer** (**Layer > Flatten Image**), and you're finished (**Figure 6**).

## Warping Text

Warping text is another great time-wasting feature. You can spend way too much time playing with all of the effects possible. Here is how it works:

1. Enter the text using the **Type** tool.
2. Highlight the text and click the **Create Warped Text** icon in the **Options** bar, which opens the **Warp Text** dialog (**Figure 7**).
3. After selecting a **Style**, use the controls to manipulate the degree and direction of warping.
4. When it appears the way you want it to, click **OK**, then click the **Commit** checkmark in the **Options** bar.

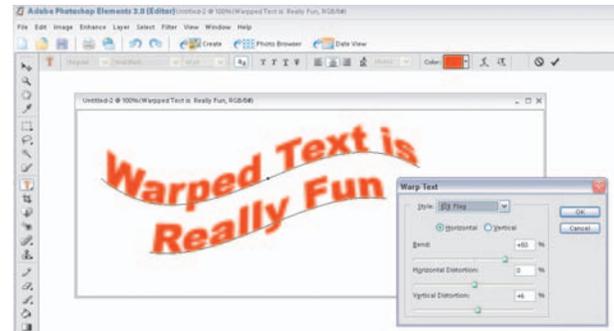


Figure 7. The Warp Text dialog.

Here is an exercise to show one of the many uses for warped text.

1. Download and open the file **Coffee\_cup.jpg** at [www.peachpit.com/50coolways](http://www.peachpit.com/50coolways).
2. Select the **Type** tool and change the font to **Impact** at **30 points**, the font color to **blue**, the alignment to **centered**, and the **leading** to **30 points**.
3. Enter the text **Real Coffee Real Cup** as shown in **Figure 8**.
4. Click the **Warped Text** icon and when the **Warp Text** dialog opens, change the **Style** to **Arc**. As you can see (**Figure 9**), this style doesn't make the text look like it is painted on the cup.
5. Change the following settings in the Warp Text dialog: **Bend** to **20%**, **Horizontal Distortion** to **0%**, and **Vertical Distortion** to **14%**. Click the **OK** button and the **Commit** checkmark in the **Options** bar. The resulting text should look like that shown in **Figure 10**.



Figure 8.



Figure 9.



Figure 10.