

Cropping (PE3)

The Crop tool is one of my favorite tools. It can help me do two things: eliminate the extraneous from the picture while placing the emphasis on the subject, and resizing the picture for a potential output. Sometimes I only crop for esthetics. In that case I rework the image until I get it cleaned up as much as I can. Then I save the file as a master file. If I think the picture needs it, I crop it for size. To use the Crop Tool open a photo and **click on the Crop Tool symbol** in the Tool Bar.



Type the desired final dimensions into the Width and Height windows and click and drag the Crop Tool across the photo. But caution - before you complete the crop, recheck your dimensions. Did you enter only numbers? If you did, then note that Photoshop Elements considers numbers without dimensions to be a request to use pixels. If you want inches, add in after the number, such as 10 in by 8 in. (Note that later versions of Photoshop Elements have a selection of crop sizes, available from a drop down menu.) **Click on the photo and drag the Crop Markings out until you have the features captured that you want.** After you release the mouse, you can click and drag to reposition the Crop Markings for better positioning in the picture. To make the Crop final, either double click the picture inside the crop area or click on the check mark in the tool bar above the

picture. If you like the picture as you cropped it, then Save it as a PSD file. If you don't like the cropping, then select Ctrl+Z to undo the Crop. Redo the Crop until you are satisfied. **Save** your file. (Saving it as a PSD file preserves your original, which was probably a JPEG file.)

Image Size and Cropping

When you Crop your photos, you are trading off image size and resolution. This is a typical photo of dog begging for food.



When I check the original photo Image Size, I find it is 11.4 in by 8.5 in at 180 pixels/inch. To trade off size versus resolution, open **Image>Resize>ImageSize** and **uncheck the selection for Resample image**. Then I crop the picture to 8 in by 10 in using the Crop Tool. I get an 8 in by 10 in at 144 pixels per inch. I lost resolution. So I undo the first Crop and Re-Crop at 5 in by 7 in. My resolution jumps to 205 pixels per inch.



I now have a file that will make a good print with my inkjet printer. Sometimes you trade off printed picture size for resolution. It is worth the trade.

jcdurrett@gmail.com