Shoot Great Images™

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More Light

The Exposure adjustment affects the brightness of all tones in the image, from the lightest to the darkest. But maybe you only need to adjust part of the tonal range with—more light. That's when the Lighting adjustment can help.
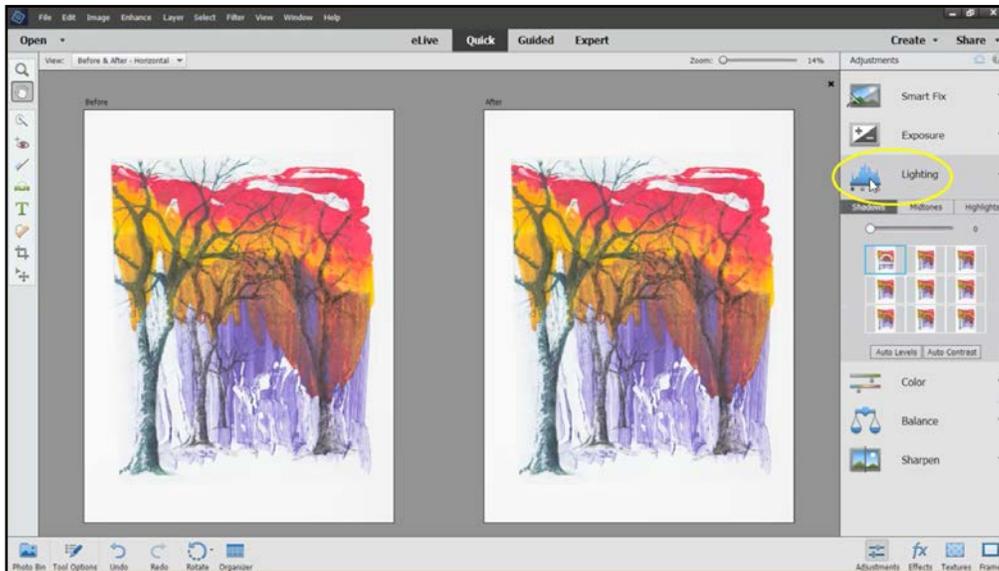
I have a fresh version of the image file open showing the before and after views, closed the Photo Bin, and made the images larger. I'll click on Lighting in the adjustments panel, where you'll see three tabs—Shadows, Midtones, and Highlights. Let's see what each of the adjustments does.

Shadows

With the Shadows adjustment, I can lighten just the darker parts of the image without affecting the whites, like the mat. As with the other adjustments, click on one of the thumbnail images, drag the slider, or type in a number between 0 and 100 until you're satisfied with how the darker areas look. Remember, too, the numbers are only an adjustment scale and don't mean anything else.

Highlights

The Highlights adjustment darkens only the lightest portions of the image if, for example, they were a

Edit for Polish

little too reflective—without affecting the shadows.

Midtones

The Midtones adjustment affects the middle tonal values (the ones about halfway between pure white and pure black) by increasing or decreasing the contrast. It does not affect the extreme highlights or shadows. Most images can benefit from a slight increase in midtone contrast, but don't go overboard.

By the way, you can skip the "auto" adjustment buttons at the bottom—they will rarely produce the best result for images of artwork.

Lighting Adjustments

1. Open an image in Photoshop® Elements in Quick edit mode (or another photo editing program on your computer).

2. Click on Lighting in the adjustments panel

3. Adjust the Shadows

   ☐ Click on the Shadows tab
   ☐ Move the cursor over each of the thumbnail presets
   ☐ Click on the thumbnail that best adjusts the image
   ☐ Drag the slider to fine-tune the adjustment

4. Adjust the Highlights

   ☐ Click on the Highlights tab
   ☐ Move the cursor over each of the thumbnail presets
   ☐ Click on the thumbnail that best adjusts the image
   ☐ Drag the slider to fine-tune the adjustment

5. Adjust the Midtones

   ☐ Click on the Midtones tab
   ☐ Move the cursor over each of the thumbnail presets
   ☐ Click on the thumbnail that best adjusts the image
   ☐ Drag the slider to fine-tune the adjustment

6. Try out each of the "Auto" adjustment buttons. Do they provide a better result than the adjustments you made? ☐ Yes ☐ No If no, describe the difference here:

2