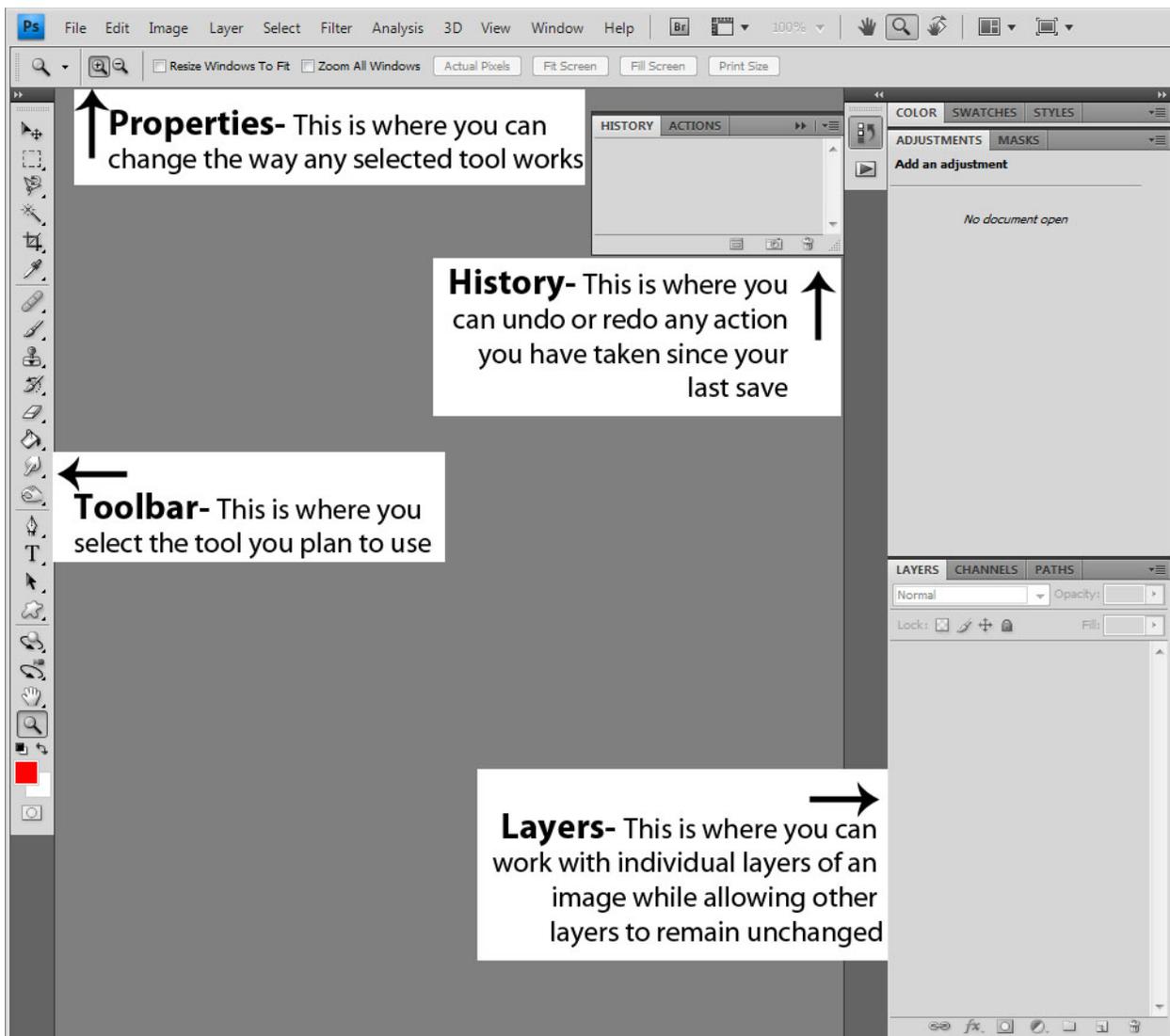# Adobe Photoshop- Introduction to Layers

Photoshop is a popular photo and graphics editing software package with advanced tools that allow you to change images. The best way to understand how Photoshop works is to first understand the concept of Layers and then see how the selection tools work.
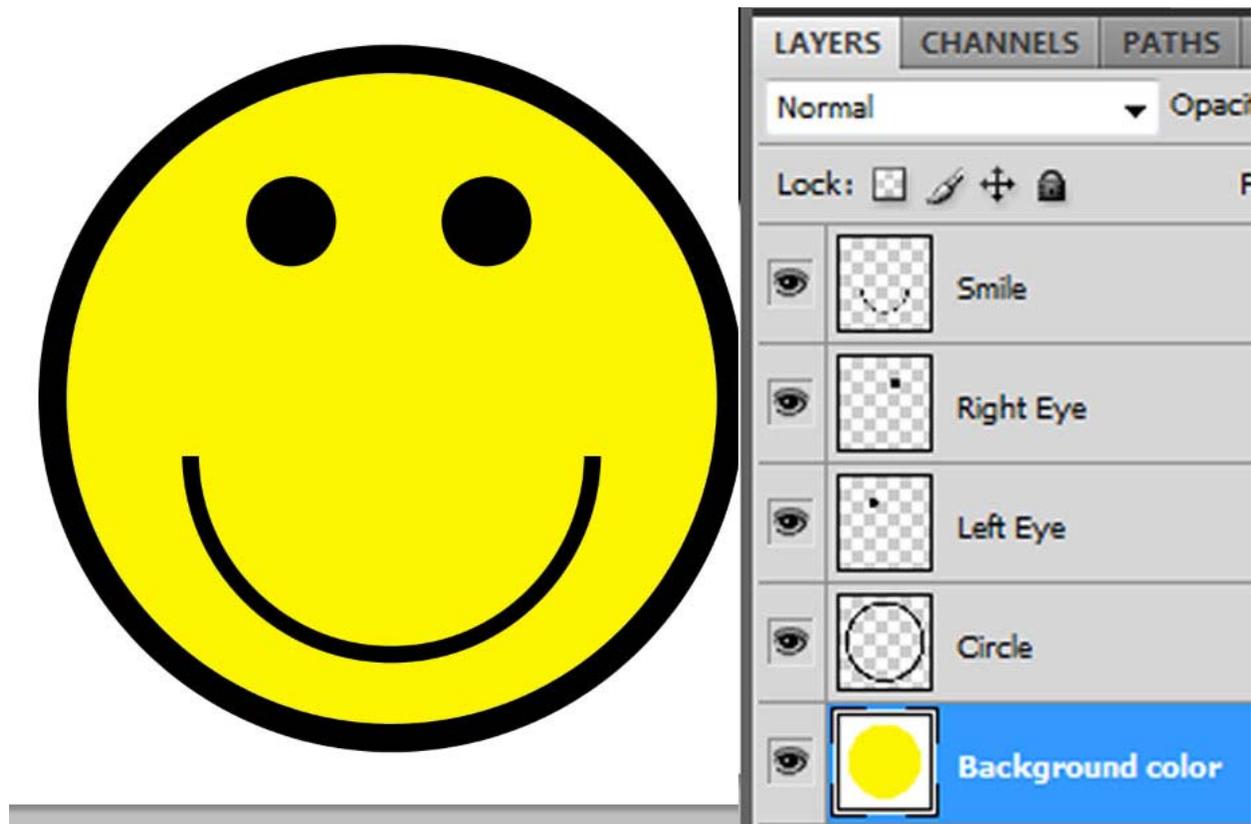
This is the Photoshop interface, and these are the most commonly used elements on the screen:

In this lesson, we will talk about how layers work, and then we will practice using the selection tools. After that, we will learn to use tools designed to retouch a photograph. Finally, we will combine two photos. All of these goals will be accomplished through use of pre-made tutorials.

When you become an expert with these techniques, you will create your own original image from two or more photographs.

Photoshop works in layers. Look at this picture:

 The smiley face is made on several layers. The best way to imagine how this image was created is to picture four see-through plastic sheets (like overhead transparencies). On the first sheet, you draw a circle. On the second sheet, you draw the left eye. On the third, the right eye, and on the fourth, you draw the smile. Taken separately, these elements don't make sense, but when stacked together like layers are, they generate a whole image. Take a look at the layers palette to see which elements exist on each layer.

Let's take a look at the layers palette. Open Photoshop, click on windows at the top of the page, and make sure there is a checkmark next to the word "layers." Now select file>open, navigate to my pictures> sample pictures and choose one of the samples. It will open in front of you. After it opens, select the horizontal type tool from the toolbar.
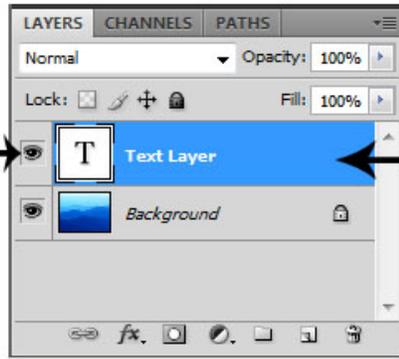

Go to the top of the page (the properties of the tool appear here), and select a font and size you like. Type the name of the photo. In this example, I have opened the photo called Blue Hills and typed the text on the screen.

Once you have done this, you the text becomes an independent layer.

The blue highlight will indicate which layer you can edit. If you want to alter the text, you must select that layer by clicking on the layer name in this box. To edit the image, select the layer upon which the image appears. Select the text layer and the move tool; try to move the text. You see that the text moves, but the layer with the photo stays put.

Click on the eye
icon to view or
hide the layer

The blue highlight
identifies which
layer is selected