

Introduction to the Photoshop Workspace

Adobe Photoshop Masterclass - Lesson 1

Photoshop is a raster image editor, which means it builds images using pixels. This is perfect for photo editing, posters, banners, mockups, social media graphics, and digital artwork. The most important idea in this lesson is workspace control: when you know where tools, panels, and document settings live, you stop guessing and start working like a designer.

The Toolbar holds the tools you use directly on the canvas. The Move Tool (V) positions layers, the Brush Tool (B) paints, the Type Tool (T) creates text, and selection tools help isolate parts of an image. The Options Bar changes depending on the selected tool, so always check it before assuming a tool is not working.

The Layers panel is where professional Photoshop work happens. Each image, text object, shape, or adjustment can sit on its own layer. This allows you to edit one part without damaging the rest of the design. The History panel helps you step backward, but good designers rely more on layers, masks, and smart objects than on undo.

Document setup matters before design begins. Use 72 DPI for screen graphics like WhatsApp posters and social media posts. Use 300 DPI for print work such as flyers, certificates, posters, banners, and business cards. RGB is normally for screens; CMYK is safer for print. Always name your file properly and save a PSD copy so you can edit layers later.

From the full Photoshop Masterclass notes, remember that graphic design is not just decoration. It communicates, persuades, builds identity, and captures attention. A poster, flyer, or social media advert should have a clear message, a target audience, and a reason for every visual decision.

The main design elements are line, shape, color, typography, texture, and space. Lines guide the eye, shapes structure information, color creates emotion, typography controls readability, texture adds feeling, and white space gives the design breathing room. The core principles are balance, contrast, emphasis, alignment, proximity, repetition, movement, and unity. Before opening Photoshop, ask: What should the viewer notice first? What should they do after seeing the design?

File formats matter in professional delivery. Save editable work as PSD. Export JPEG for photos and online sharing, PNG for transparent graphics and logos, PDF/TIFF for print, GIF for simple animation, and SVG only when preserving vector-style web graphics. A good workflow is: save the PSD first, then export the final version required by the client or platform.