

Topic: Using the Clone Stamp Tool:

The Clone tool is one of the more popular editing tools in both PhotoShop and Adobe Elements. It is fairly easy to master and is capable of really good results. The following is a brief outline of the process you need to use to successfully use the tool.

1. Open the image in either PhotoShop or Elements and zoom in on the area that needs to be repaired using the Zoom tool.
2. Click on to the damaged pixels until the area is large on screen. Never work small. TIP: Alternatively hold down Ctrl+Spacebar (Cmd+Spacebar Mac) to turn the current tool into a zoom tool, continue to click and release Ctrl+Spacebar (Cmd+Spacebar Mac) to return to the previously selected tool.
3. From the Toolbox select the Clone Stamp tool by clicking the icon. Or use the keyboard shortcut 'S'.
4. On the Clone Stamp tool options bar make sure that the Mode: is set to Normal, Opacity: is 100%, (and if using PhotoShop 7.0 or greater that Flow: is set to 100%) Aligned: is ticked and Use all Layers: is un-ticked.
5. Now also from the Clone Stamp Tool options bar select a soft-edge brush of suitable size so that the brush will just cover the area that needs to be cloned. Once selected you can use the keyboard square brackets to change the brush size. The left square bracket decreases and the right square bracket increases the current brush size on the fly.
6. Move back into your image window and locate an area of 'good' pixels that you can use to 'clone' over the damaged pixels. Ideally this should be as close as possible in appearance as the damaged pixels so similar tones and textures and brightness values are being copied. This will minimise any tell-tale signs of repair.
7. If you're not careful you will cover up the original damaged and replace it with an equally annoying and noticeable mark.
8. Once you have located a suitable area to clone simply hold down the **Alt** key (Opt Mac) and click your left mouse button. You have just sampled the area immediately below the cursor; it is this part of the image that will be used as the clone source.
9. Release the **Alt** button (Opt Mac).
10. Move your cursor over the damaged area of pixels that need repair and simply click and release. The damaged pixels immediately under the clicked point will be replaced with the good source pixels you selected in Step 8.
11. If the damage is a long thin 'scratch' simply click, release, move along the damage and click again. Continue clicking until the damaged is repaired. Alternatively click, hold, drag and then release the mouse at the end of the damaged. The area between the start and finish points will be cloned.
12. At **ALL** times make sure you are fully aware of the location of the small cross that follows and is offset from the brush cursor as it indicates what part of the image is currently being used as the source.
13. Because the 'Aligned' option has been selected, the cross will follow any movement made as you use the clone tool. You must be very careful the cross does not drift into areas depicting unrepresentative pixels or these will be cloned.
14. This is a very important point and definitely something you need to watch. So be prepared to resample often by moving to another area hold down **Alt** (Opt Mac) and click.
15. *An alternative way of using the Clone tool is to make use of the **Mode:** option located on the Clone Tool Option bar. If there are damaged pixels that are '**Light**' in tone set Mode; option to **Darken**. If the damaged pixels are '**Dark**' in tone set Mode: option to **Lighten**.
16. In both cases Alt click a sample as before and tap or paint. Only the Clone Tool will now only replace the respective damaged tone leaving similar or lighter or darker tones unaffected.