



## Adobe Certified Professional in Visual Design Using Adobe Photoshop

Exam versions: **2022 (23.x), 2023 (24.x), and 2024 (25.x)**

Adobe Certified Professional certifications, delivered by [Certiport](#), are the official, industry-recognized credentials that validate entry-level proficiency in Adobe Creative Cloud applications and foundational knowledge for digital media careers.

The *Visual Design Using Adobe Photoshop* exam is 50-minutes in length, comprised of two sections – selected-response items followed by live-in-the-app tasks inside Photoshop – and designed with the following Target Candidate in mind:

*The Target Candidate (TC) has approximately 150 hours of instruction and hands-on experience with the product and is familiar with product features and capabilities, as well as relevant career concepts. The TC is generally self-sufficient and able to apply knowledge of graphic design principles to perform basic or routine tasks involved in their job role with limited assistance from peers, product documentation or support services. The TC generally works in collaboration with colleagues or with supervision. Furthermore, the TC will be able to answer most routine conceptual and applied questions about how to use Photoshop and usually does not have to refer basic questions to others. They can speak credibly to other users or clients about what can be done with Photoshop and about how to use it effectively.*

To learn more, visit [certifiedprofessional.adobe.com/photoshop](https://certifiedprofessional.adobe.com/photoshop).

### 1. Working in the Design Industry

*This objective covers critical concepts related to working with colleagues and clients as well as crucial legal, technical, and design-related knowledge.*

#### 1.1 Identify the purpose, audience, and audience needs for preparing images.

**1.1.a** Determine whether content is relevant to the purpose, audience, audience needs, user experience, and has an appropriate design for target devices.

*i. Key Terms: client goals, target audience, demographics, accessibility, etc.*

**1.1.b** Identify requirements based on how the image will be used, including video, print, and web.

#### 1.2 Communicate with colleagues and clients about design plans.

**1.2.a** Demonstrate knowledge of techniques for communicating about design plans with peers and clients.

*i. Key Terms: sketches, specifications, design process, wireframes, prototypes, iterations, change orders, drafts, feedback loop, etc.*

**1.2.b** Demonstrate knowledge of basic project management concepts.

*i. Key Terms: project scope, scope creep, cloud collaboration and file management*

#### 1.3 Determine the type of copyright, permissions, and licensing required to use specific content.

**1.3.a** Identify legal and ethical considerations for using third-party content, such as copyright, permissions, and licensing.

*i. Key Terms: Creative Commons, public domain, intellectual property, derivative work, commercial use, attribution, work for hire, fair use, fair dealing, stock images, etc.*

**1.3.b** Identify when and how to obtain permission to use images of people and locations.

*i. Key Terms: model release, location release, etc.*

*ii. Key Concepts: permission to use a photo is separate from permission to use a person's face or restricted location, etc.*

## **1.4 Demonstrate knowledge of key terminology related to digital images.**

**1.4.a** Demonstrate knowledge of digital image terminology.

*i. Key Terms: image resolution, image size, file types, pixel, raster, bitmap, vector, path, object, type, rasterizing, rendering, resampling, resizing, image size measured in pixels vs document size measured in inches/centimeters, etc.*

**1.4.b** Demonstrate knowledge of how color is created in digital images.

*i. Key Terms: color mode, bit depth, gamut, CMYK vs. RGB vs. grayscale, etc.*

## **1.5 Demonstrate knowledge of basic design principles and best practices employed in the design industry.**

**1.5.a** Communicate visually by using the elements and principles of design and common design techniques.

*i. Key Terms: space, line, shape, form, color, texture, emphasis/focal point, unity/harmony, variety, balance, alignment, proximity, repetition, rhythm, scale, movement, negative space, gestalt, etc.*

**1.5.b** Identify and use common typographic adjustments to create contrast, hierarchy, and enhanced readability/legibility.

*i. Key Terms: font, size, style, color, alignment, kerning, tracking, leading, horizontal and vertical scale, line length, etc.*

**1.5.c** Demonstrate knowledge of common photographic/cinematic composition terms and principles.

*i. Key Terms: aspect ratio, rule of thirds, foreground, background, color, tone, contrast, framing, depth of field, field of view, white balance, etc.*

## **2. Project Setup and Interface**

*This objective covers the interface setup and program settings that assist in an efficient and effective workflow, as well as knowledge about importing digital assets for a project.*

### **2.1 Create a document with the appropriate settings for web, print, and video.**

**2.1.a** Set appropriate document settings for printed and onscreen images.

*i. Key Concepts: width/height, orientation, artboards, resolution, color mode, bit depth, background, etc.*

**2.1.b** Create a new document preset to reuse for specific project needs.

### **2.2 Navigate, organize, and customize the application workspace.**

**2.2.a** Identify and manipulate elements of the Photoshop interface.

*i. Key Concepts: Options bar, menus, panels, toolbar, artboards, etc.*

**2.2.b** Organize and customize the workspace.

*i. Key Concepts: tabbed documents; showing, hiding, nesting, and docking panels; saving and resetting workspaces; shortcuts and menus; etc.*

**2.2.c** Configure application preferences.

*i. Key Concepts: Units & Rulers, Guides, Grids & Slices, Performance, Scratch Disks, Interface, etc.*

## **2.3 Use non-printing design tools in the interface to aid in design or workflow.**

### **2.3.a** Navigate a document.

*i. Key Concepts: panning, zooming, rotating canvas, etc.*

### **2.3.b** Use rulers.

*i. Key Concepts: showing and hiding rulers, changing the measurement unit on rulers, etc.*

### **2.3.c** Use guides and grids.

*i. Key Concepts: adding/removing and locking/unlocking guides, setting color, showing/hiding guides and grids, using snap or align options, creating guide layouts, etc.*

## **2.4 Import assets into a project.**

### **2.4.a** Open or import images from various devices.

*i. Key Concepts: file, camera, scanner, etc.*

### **2.4.b** Place assets in a Photoshop document.

*i. Key Concepts: embedded, linked, copy and pasted, etc.*

### **2.4.c** Use the Adobe Camera Raw interface to import images.

## **2.5 Manage colors, swatches, and gradients.**

### **2.5.a** Set the active foreground and background color.

*i. Key Concepts: Color Picker, swatches, Eyedropper tool, hexadecimal value, etc.*

### **2.5.b** Create, customize, and organize gradients.

*i. Key Concepts: Gradient panel, editing color and transparency stops, gradient options (i.e. radial and elliptical), grouping etc.*

### **2.5.c** Create, edit, and organize swatches.

*i. Key Concepts: grouping, creating, importing, and exporting*

## **2.6 Work with brushes, styles, and patterns.**

### **2.6.a** Open, browse, and search libraries of included brushes, styles, and patterns.

### **2.6.b** Create, use, edit, and organize brushes, styles, and patterns.

## **3. Organizing Documents**

*This objective covers document structure such as layers and managing document structure for efficient workflows.*

### **3.1 Use layers to manage design elements.**

#### **3.1.a** Use the Layers panel to manage visual content.

*i. Key Concepts: adding, deleting, hiding/showing, locking/unlocking, and duplicating, etc.*

#### **3.1.b** Manage and organize layers in a complex project.

*i. Key Concepts: renaming layers, creating layer groups, deleting empty layers, keeping the Layers panel organized, selecting, grouping vs. linking, flatten and merge, tradeoffs with editability and file size, etc.*

#### **3.1.c** Recognize the different types of layers in the Layers panel.

*i. Key Concepts: background, pixel, adjustment, type, fill, shape, vector, Smart Object (embedded and linked), active/inactive (hidden), artboard layers, etc.*

### **3.2 Modify layer visibility using opacity, blending modes, and masks.**

#### **3.2.a** Adjust a layer's opacity, blending mode, and fill opacity.

**3.2.b** Create and edit masks.

*i. Key Concepts: layer masks, clipping masks, frame tool, applying, deleting, disabling, and link/unlink, etc.*

**3.3 Differentiate between and perform destructive or nondestructive editing to meet design requirements.**

**3.3.a** Perform nondestructive editing: Smart Objects, Smart Filters, and adjustment layers.

**3.3.b** Perform destructive editing: painting, adjustments, erasing, and rasterizing.

**4. Creating and Modifying Visual Elements**

*This objective covers core tools and functionality of the application.*

**4.1 Use core tools and features to create visual elements.**

**4.1.a** Create and edit raster images.

*i. Key Tools: Crop, Perspective Crop, Pencil, Clone Stamp, History Brush, Eraser, Background Eraser, Magic Eraser, Gradient, and Paint Bucket*

**4.1.b** Create and edit vector images.

*i. Key Tools: Pen, Freeform Pen, Curvature Pen, Add Anchor Point, Delete Anchor Point, Convert Point, Rectangle, Rounded Rectangle, Ellipse, Triangle, Polygon, Line, and Custom Shape*

**4.2 Add and manipulate text using appropriate typographic settings.**

**4.2.a** Use type tools to add typography to a design.

**4.2.b** Adjust character and paragraph settings in a design.

*i. Key Concepts: using font, size, style, alignment, and color to enhance legibility, readability, and hierarchy; kerning, tracking, leading, and horizontal and vertical scale, etc.*

**4.2.c** Convert text to graphics.

*i. Key Concepts: rasterizing type*

**4.3 Make, manage, and manipulate selections.**

**4.3.a** Make selections using a variety of tools.

*i. Key Tools: Quick Selection, Lasso tool, Magic Wand, marquee selection tools, Select Subject, Object Selection tool, Select Sky, etc.*

**4.3.b** Modify and refine selections using various methods.

*i. Key Concepts: keyboard modifiers, feather, expand, contract, inverse, select and mask workspace, refine hair, add to and subtract from selection, deselect, etc.*

**4.3.c** Save and load selections as channels.

**4.4 Transform digital graphics and media.**

**4.4.a** Modify the canvas or artboards.

*i. Key Tools: resizing, cropping, expanding, resampling, etc.*

*ii. Key Concepts: understanding the difference between resize and resample, etc.*

**4.4.b** Rotate, flip, and modify individual layers, objects, selections, groups, and graphical elements.

*i. Key Concepts: transforming, warping, distorting, skewing, etc.*

**4.5 Use basic reconstructing and retouching techniques to manipulate digital graphics and media.**

- 4.5.a Apply basic auto-correction methods and tools.
  - 4.5.b Use various tools to repair and reconstruct images.
    - i. *Key Tools: healing tools, clone tools, Content-Aware tools, liquify, etc.*
  - 4.5.c Evaluate or adjust the appearance of objects, selections, or layers using various tools.
    - i. *Key Concepts: adjustments, adjustment layers, histogram, opacity, Eyedropper tool, etc.*
  - 4.5.d Use Photoshop tools to manage exposure and saturation.
    - i. *Key Tools: Burn tool, Dodge tool, Desaturate options, etc.*
- 4.6 Modify the appearance of design elements by using filters and styles.**
- 4.6.a Use filters to modify images destructively or non-destructively.
    - i. *Key Concepts: Smart Filters vs filters, etc.*
  - 4.6.b Apply, modify, copy, and remove layer styles.
  - 4.6.c Create, manage, and save custom layer styles.

## 5. Publishing Digital Media

*This objective covers saving and exporting documents or assets within individual layers or selections.*

### 5.1 Prepare images for export to web, print, and video.

- 5.1.a Check document for errors and project specifications.
  - i. *Key Concepts: setting color space, resolution, pixel dimensions, metadata, etc.*

### 5.2 Export or save digital images to various file formats.

- 5.2.a Save in the native file format for Photoshop (.psd).
  - i. *Key Concepts: compatibility, saving as a copy, saving locally vs. in the Cloud, etc.*
- 5.2.b Save in appropriate image formats for the intended purpose.
  - i. *Key Concepts: file format, bit depth, color space, resolution, pixel dimensions, etc.*
- 5.2.c Export project elements.
  - i. *Key Concepts: exporting layers, exporting selections, exporting to files, exporting to libraries, metadata, etc.*

NOTE: All key items (Key Terms, Key Tools, Key Concepts, and Key Settings) are examples and not a comprehensive list. Changes in the industry or application may necessitate coverage of items not listed that apply to the Target Candidate description for the Adobe Certified Professional program.