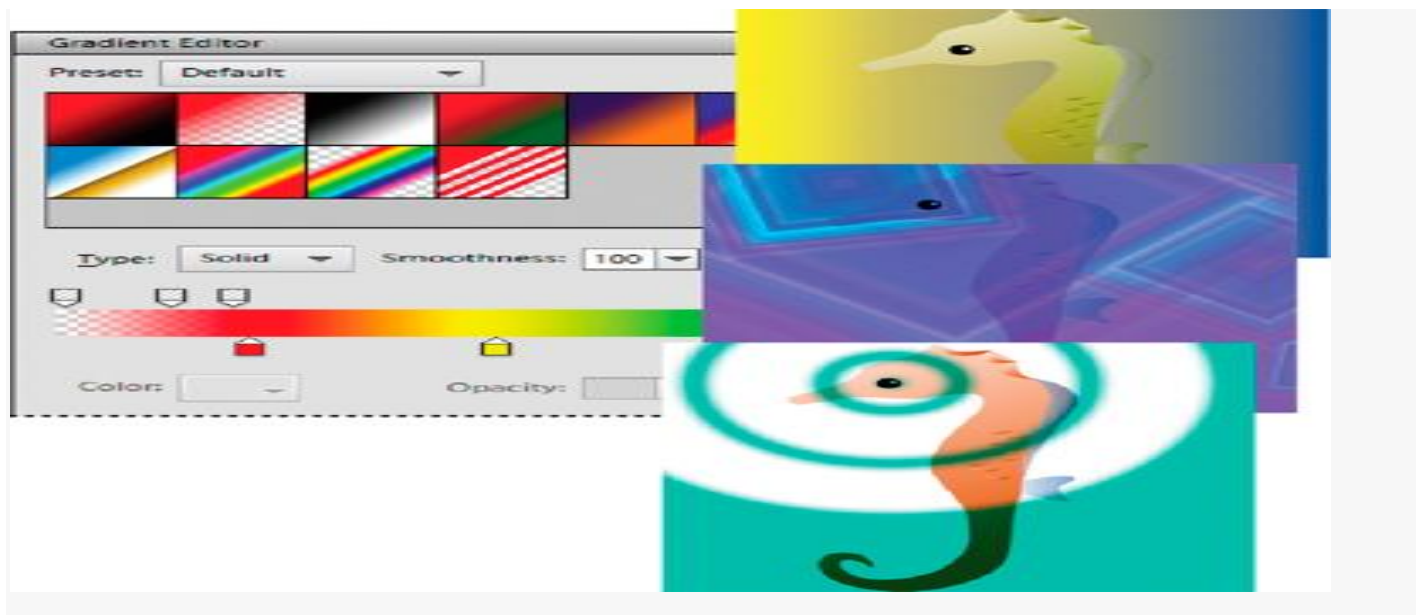## Lesson no. 6: Working with Tools

11. Paint Bucket tool (K)

The Paint Bucket tool fills an area, that is similar in color value to the pixels you click. You can fill an area with the foreground color or a pattern.

1. Choose a foreground color.
2. Select the Paint Bucket tool in the toolbox.
3. Set options in the Tool Options bar, as desired, and then click the part of the image you want to fill.

Gradient tool (G)

You fill an area with a gradient by dragging within the image or by selecting with the Gradient tool. The distance between the starting point (where you first press the mouse button) and ending point (where you release the mouse button) affects the gradient appearance, as does the gradient type.

12. Blur tool (R) or Soften edges

The Blur tool softens hard edges or areas in an image by reducing detail. Blurring a busy background can bring your subject more into focus. You can also use Blur filters for this purpose. For more information on Blur filter.

Original photo (left), and photo after blurring the background (right).

Sharpen tool (R)

The Auto Sharpen command increases clarity or focus without the risk of over sharpening an image.

The Sharpen tool focuses soft edges in a photo to increase clarity or focus. Over sharpening a photo gives it a grainy look. You can avoid over sharpening by setting a lower Strength value in the options bar. It's best to make the sharpening subtle and increase it as necessary by dragging over the area several times, building up the sharpness each time.

The Adjust Sharpness dialog box has sharpening controls not available with the Sharpen tool or with Auto Sharpen. You can set the sharpening algorithm or control the amount of sharpening that occurs in shadow and highlight areas.

Sharpen areas of an image

Original image (top), two faces sharpened correctly (bottom left), and two faces oversharpened (bottom right)

Smudge tool (R)

The Smudge tool simulates the actions of dragging a finger through wet paint. The tool picks up color where the stroke begins and pushes it in the direction you drag. You can smudge existing colors in your image, or smear foreground color on the image.

Original image (left), and after smudging parts of the photo (right)

1. From the Enhance section in the toolbox, select the Smudge tool (If you don't see it in the toolbox, select either the Blur tool or the Sharpen tool and then click the Smudge tool icon from the Tool Options bar.)
2. Set options in the Tool Options bar, and then drag within the image to smudge color.