

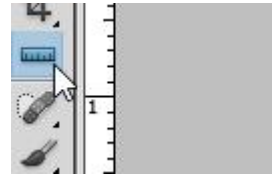
Picture Perfect. 1 Straighten and Crop

Straighten

Horizons usually need to be straight. Verticals often need to be vertical.



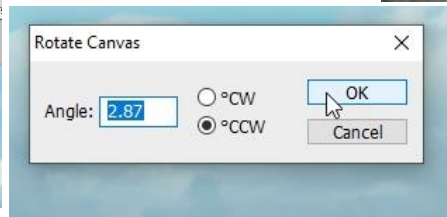
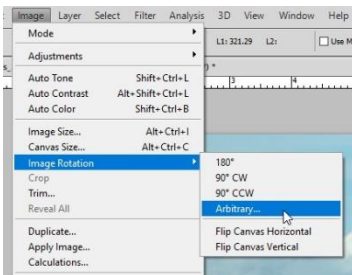
CS5's way of dealing with this is not all that obvious. Choose the **Ruler** tool.



Find a line that should be horizontal (or vertical). Drag the cursor along that line.



Go to **Image>Rotation>Arbitrary** and click **OK** in the box that pops up.



Elements does the same job a bit more readily. Use the **Straighten** tool. Draw the line as in CS5 and when you let go the cursor, the job is done.

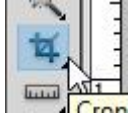


Both programmes rotate the image to line up your straight line with the margin, and they both leave white areas where the corners were.

To get rid of these, use the **Crop** tool.



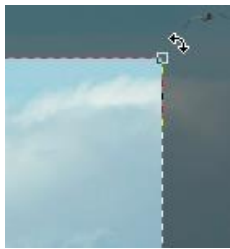
Crop



Using the Crop tool

Click on a point in your image, hold down the left mouse button and drag the cursor to form a rectangle.


Dragging on the cursor while it is inside the box moves the whole crop area.




Adjust the precise size of this rectangle by dragging on one of the eight 'handles' around the darkened edge.

The dark area around the outside, lighter **bounding box** is the bit that will be cut off when you crop.



To accept the crop, click on the **tick** at the top right. To reject the crop, click on  instead.

The double-ended arrows  at the corners of the box allow the crop to be rotated – another (less precise) way to straighten up sloping horizons, leaning buildings etc.

Holding '**Shift**' as you drag gives you a square crop.

Holding down '**Alt**' draws a rectangle, which is centred on the cursor position at the start of the drag operation.
(Hold down Alt + Shift to draw a square rectangle centred on the starting position).

To crop to a specific size, enter values for width and height in the **options bar** before you start. The resolution can also be specified here. To remove this facility once it has been set, click on '**Clear**'

Cropping can change the composition and meaning of the picture so should be used carefully.

Avoid cropping too much as the image then becomes very small.

Cropping is personal and there is usually no 'right' or 'wrong'. Keep checking in 'History' to see if you think changes are improving the picture.

Often more than one cropping is practical and different versions can have very different effects.