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Making Creations

Now that you've organized your photos so that you can find them easily, and you've fixed the ones with problems, you're ready to make *creations*, Photoshop Elements' name for slide shows, albums, cards, calendars, and Web photo galleries.

In the film-photography world, making albums takes so much effort that most people rarely get around to it. Making a calendar or a greeting card rarely crosses anyone's mind because of the difficulty and trouble each would take. And creating slide shows that friends can view on a PC or TV is out of the question. With digital photography and Photoshop Elements, however, projects such as those are easy.

This chapter explains how to prepare for making creations, how to use Elements' Creations Wizard, and how to deal with specific issues of various kinds of creations.

Choosing and Arranging Photos

To make any kind of creation, you must first find the photos you want to use. You can take one of two approaches to choosing photos and arranging them in the sequence you want:

- Make a collection with the photos you want to use in the creation, reorder them, and then make a creation from the collection.
- Select photos directly from the Photo Browser and use the reorder- and add-photos functions from within the creations process.

Although the first approach may seem more indirect, I recommend using it for all but the simplest creations. Starting with a collection allows you to assemble the photos and put them in order independently of any creation. It gives you more flexibility if you later want to add photos to the creation or make other creations from the same set of photos. For example, you can add to a collection, but not to a creation, from the Photo Browser. Starting with a collection also makes it easier to print or email the same set of photos.

Tip *If you find the terms collections and creations confusing, keep these definitions in mind: A collection is a group of photos you assemble for a purpose; a creation is a final product you create with them.*

To make a new collection, open the Organize Bin if it's not already open, and click the Collections tab. In the Collections pane, click the New button. (See Chapter 3, "Organizing Your Photos" for more on collections.) Once you've created a collection, you can add photos to it from the Photo Browser—even if the Collections pane is not displayed—by right-clicking the photo, choosing Add to Collection, and then choosing the collection name.

To view all the photos in a collection, display the Collections pane and double-click the collection's icon. The photos initially will be in the order in which you added them to the collection. If you want to put them in chronological order, right-click the collection's icon and choose Reorder Collection by Date from the pop-up menu. Then put the photos in the order you want by simply dragging and dropping them in the Photo Browser.

If you plan to use captions in your creation, you can browse the collection and add captions as needed, either using single-image view or by displaying the Properties window. Captions you enter during the creations process are part of the creation, but aren't otherwise attached to the photo files, so it's better to add captions in the catalog than in the creations workflow.

Creation Types

You begin making any type of creation by clicking the Create button in the Shortcuts bar. Elements then displays the Creation Setup dialog (Figure 8.1). In this dialog, select the type of creation you want to make, and click OK.

Note When you first install Elements, you may see the creation type “Album Pages” instead of “Photo Books and Album Pages.” When Elements connects to Adobe Photoshop Services, additional creation templates are automatically installed, and “Album Pages” is replaced by “Photo Books and Album Pages.” If you see only Album Pages, ensure that you are connected to the Internet, choose Edit > Preferences > Services, and click the Update Creations button. (If you are outside the United States, photo books might not be available.)

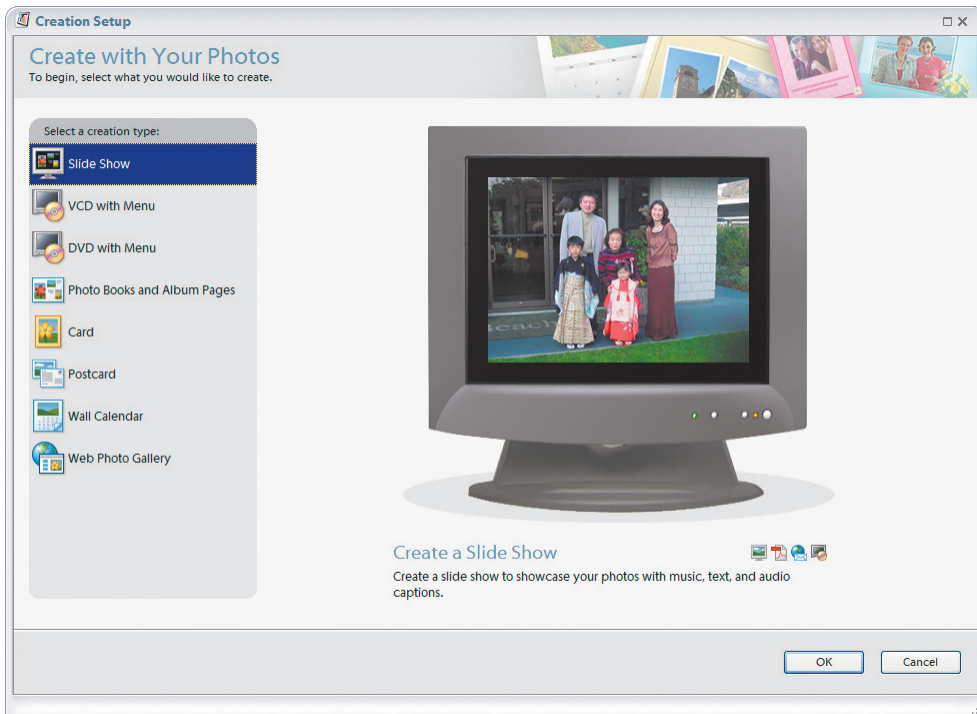


Figure 8.1 When you click the Create button, you get these choices for the types of creations you can make. (The DVD with Menu choice will not appear if Premiere Elements is not installed.)

Creations fall into three general categories:

- Dynamic creations (for screen viewing): simple and custom slide shows, Video CDs, and—if Premiere Elements is also installed—DVDs.
- Printed creations: albums (photo books), calendars, and cards.
- Web Photo Gallery: interactive creations.

Figure 8.2 shows the paths you follow in making various types of creations, and the different software modules you'll use. The creations process varies depending on the item you choose, so it's important that you know what you want to end up with before you start.

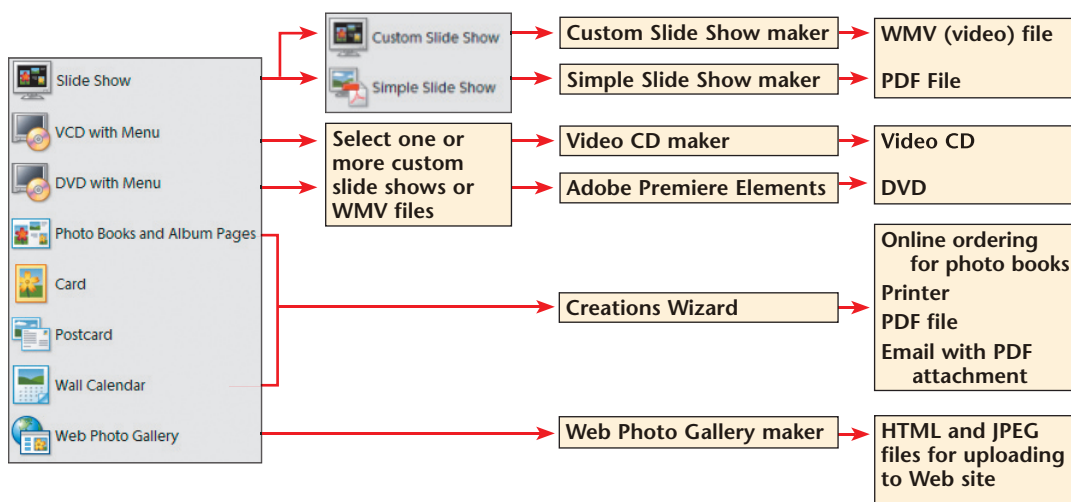


Figure 8.2 For each type of creation, there is a different editor for making it and there are various ways to output it.

To start, open a collection you've made (double-click its name in the Collections pane). Then decide how you want to share your creation—via email, sitting at your computer, or in print. This decision will determine whether you select a slide show or an album, a calendar or a card; from each, you have many options to choose.