

PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR WORK



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**All photographs are by Daryl or Kevin Lancaster,
unless otherwise noted.**

Tutorials use Adobe Photoshop Elements 4.0

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The Weaver Sews <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmz2mYvnteUP11-LvK8-eNg>

- RULE # 1: Never send original images!
- RULE # 2: Never send out work that hasn't been documented in some way.

APERTURE

- Also referred to as the F-Stop.
- The aperture is the size of the opening of the lens as it lets in light, similar to way your eye dilates in low lighting.
- The larger the aperture opening, the lower the f-stop number, e.g. f-4. NOTE, the lower the f-stop number, the shallower the depth of field, or how much is in focus.
- The smaller the aperture opening, the higher the f-stop number, e.g. f-16. NOTE, the higher the f-stop number, the greater the depth of field, or how much is in focus.

SHUTTER SPEED

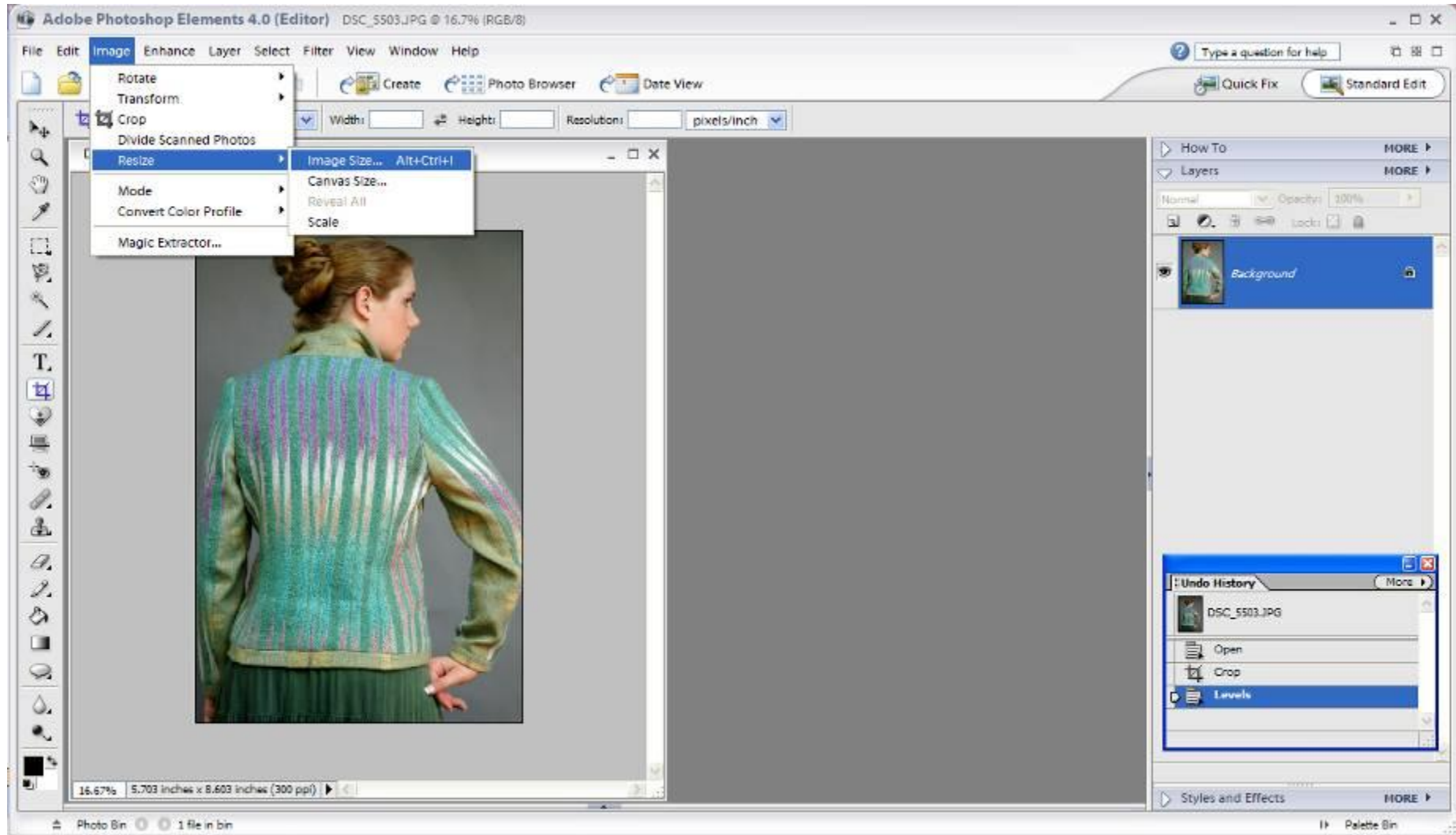
- How fast the shutter opens and closes to let in light through the lens.
- The slower the speed of the shutter, the more light enters the camera, and the more movement is recorded. e.g. 1/30 of a second. At this low a speed, the slightest movement can be detected in the photographer and the image will appear blurred. USE A TRIPOD!
- The faster the speed of the shutter, the less light enters the camera. With very fast speeds, e.g. 1/500 of a second, a moving subject can be frozen in time.

FILM SENSITIVITY OR ISO

- This refers to the light sensitivity of the film, expressed by an ISO number.
- The lower the ISO number, e.g. ISO 100, the more light needed to produce a quality photograph.
- The lower the number, the finer the grain of the film, improving the overall appearance and clarity of the photograph.
- The higher the ISO number, e.g. ISO 400, the less light needed to produce a photograph.
- The higher the number, the coarser the grain of the film, in digital photography this is referred to as 'noise'.
- High numbers like ISO 400-800, are great for photographing indoor concerts without flash, but they are unsuitable for craft photography. For the best quality photographs, use the lowest ISO you can find.

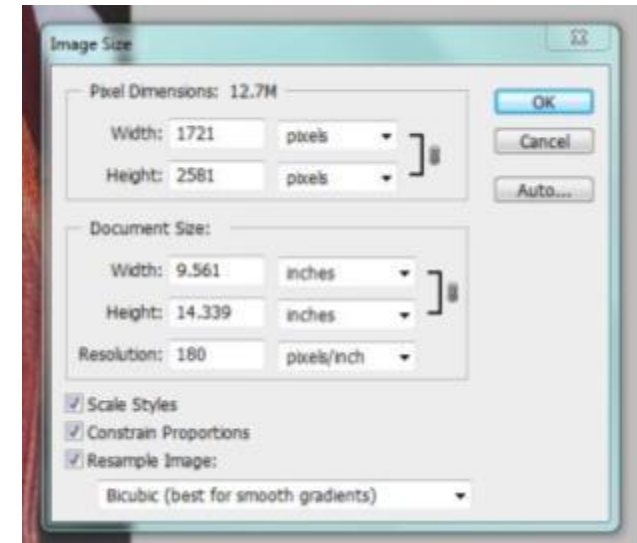
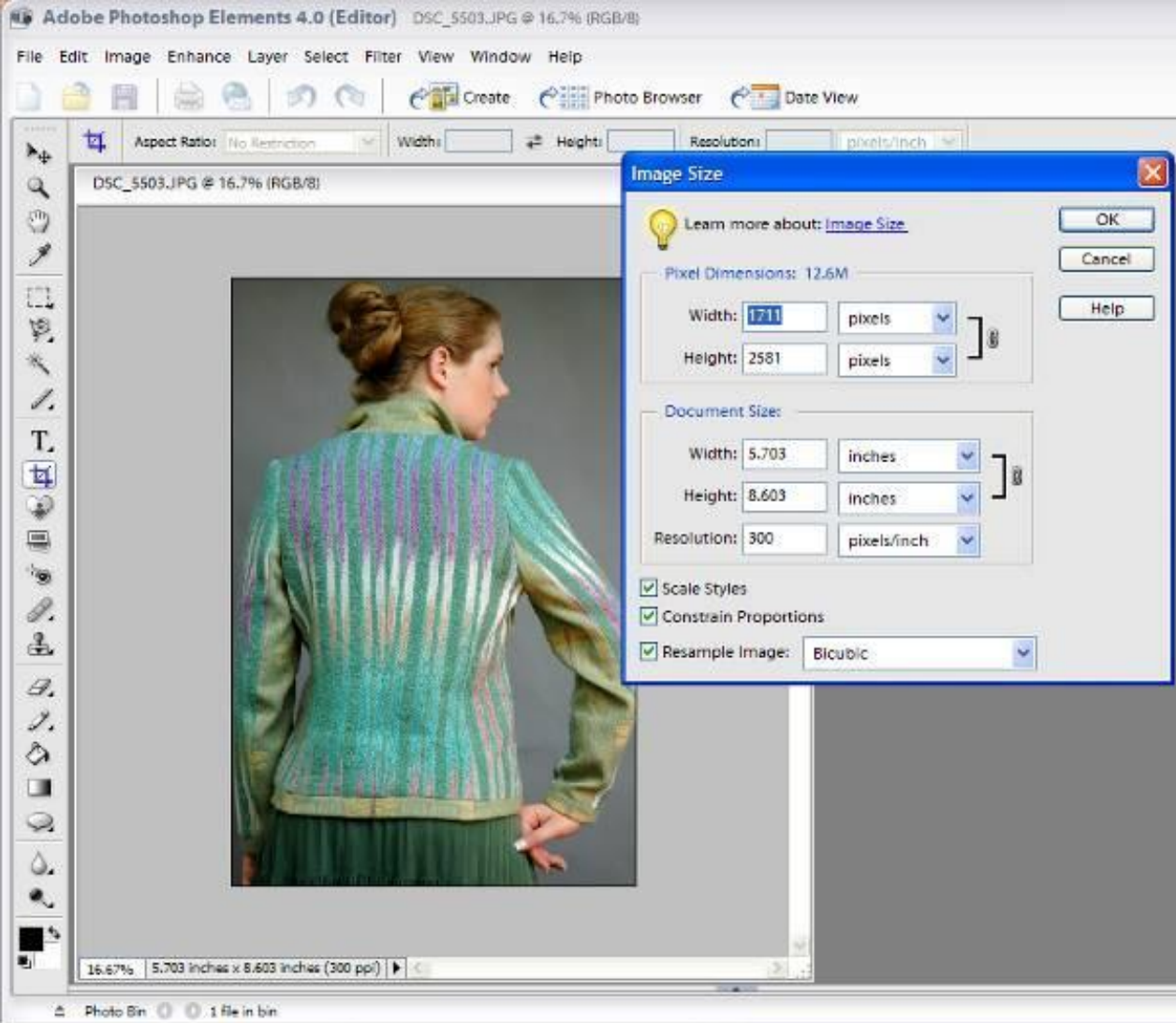
RESOLUTION

- This is a more recent part of the equation, specific to digital images.
- Resolution refers to pixel size. A pixel is a sensitive electronic sensor that responds to the amount of light reaching it. A digital photograph is made up of millions of pixels that look like tiny squares.
- A pixel can be very tiny e.g. 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or very large e.g. 72 ppi. The resolution directly affects the output of the photograph.
- 300 ppi: Use this High Resolution for very high quality output, magazine reproduction, enlargements, etc. This will produce a very large file size.
- 200 ppi: Use this Medium Resolution for normal size prints from an inkjet printer. Great for family snapshots!
- 72 ppi: Use this Low Resolution for images that are to be used in email, and websites. The lower the resolution, the lower the file size, the faster an image will download.
- Always shoot at the highest resolution (e.g. 300ppi +), you can reduce it later. You cannot go from a low resolution image to a higher one.



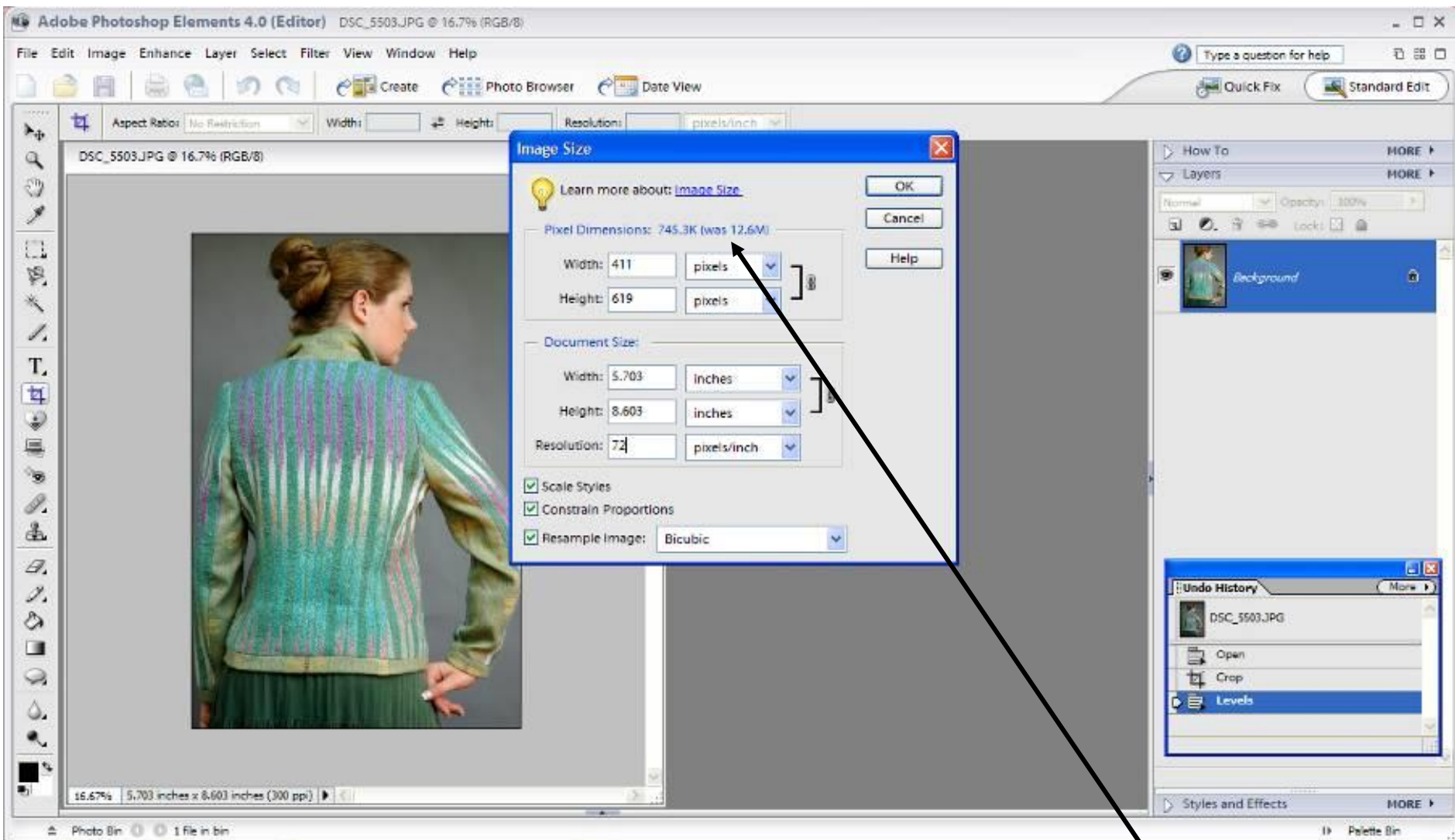
Use digital image editing software like Adobe Elements 6 to change resolution or resize images. (Tutorials used Adobe Elements 4.0)

Tip: Never use the original image, always begin edits with a copy of the original.



Note: Canon cameras shoot at 180 resolution on the highest setting, but the overall size of the photo is significantly larger. Compare an image that is shot at 300 pixels and one that is shot at 180 pixels, the images differ in size but both have the same amount of pixels and therefore the same file size.

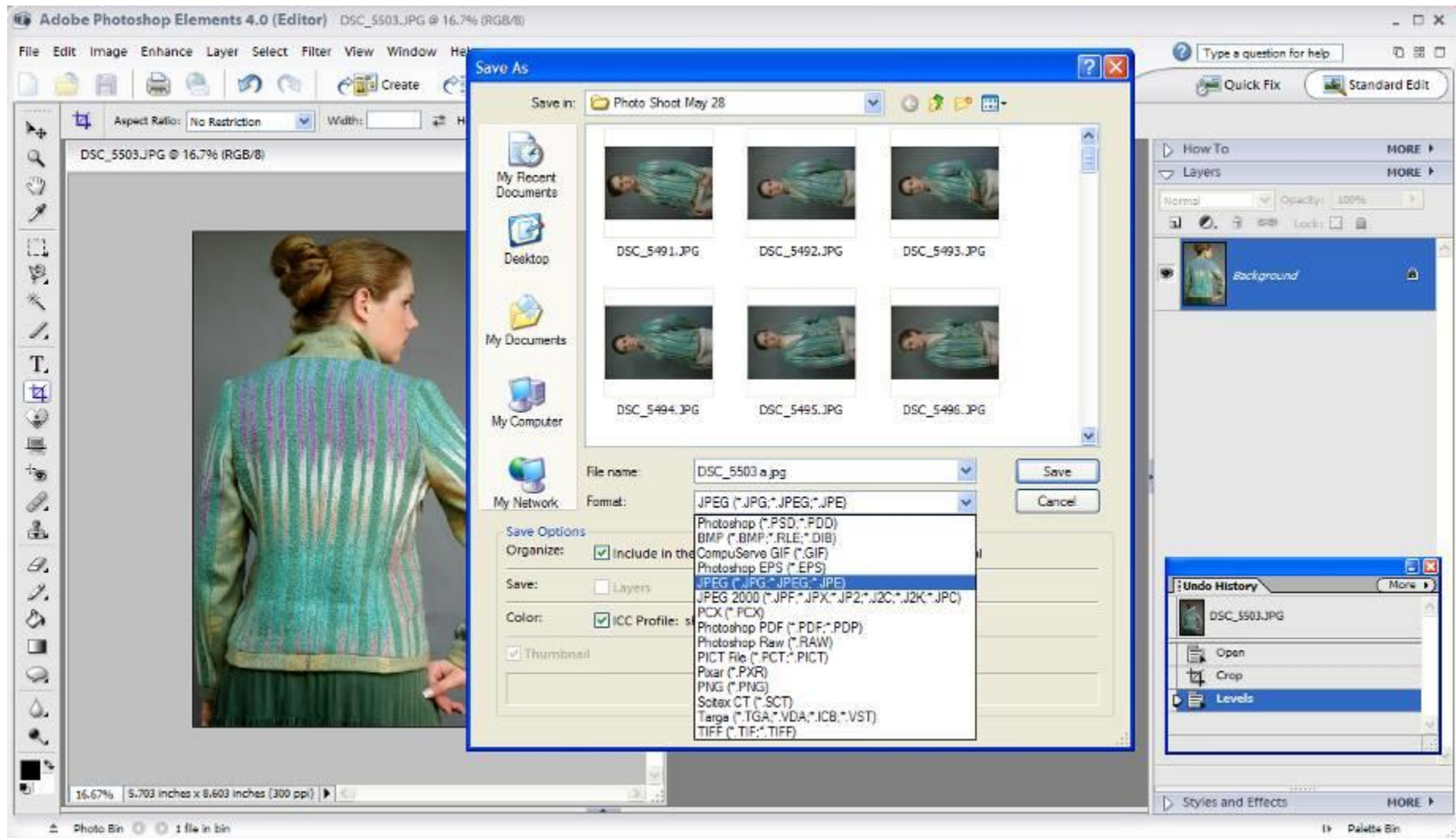
In the Image Size dialogue box, change the resolution and or the overall image size.



Under Pixel Dimensions, note the convenient before and after showing the file size. At 300 Pixels per inch, the file size was 12.6 MB, by reducing the resolution to 72 Pixels per inch, the file size is reduced to 745.3K.

FILE FORMATS

- Determine the format of a graphics file by the letters at the end of the file name. e.g. “scarf 2.jpg” All PC operating systems e.g. ‘Apple OSX’, ‘Windows 10’ recognize these formats.
- JPEG: (Joint Photographic Experts Group) A compression system that maintains acceptable quality while keeping file size small. Used primarily for photos destined for the internet. NOTE: there is a gradual loss of quality after every ‘save’, therefore called a “lossy” compression.
- TIFF: (Tagged-Image File Format) A lossless compression method, tiff files maintain their full image quality. Use for photos that matter, photos of your work, magazine reproduction.



By clicking File/Save As, the “Save As” dialogue box appears. By using the drop down menu under format, you can select the best format for the task at hand.

NOTE: Always save the original file, untouched, as a separate file.

RULE #3: Artwork should be at least
75% of the image!

RULE #4: The background should not
compete with the artwork!



GOOD:

- Somewhat neutral background.
- Pretty Model
- Tight framing

BAD:

- Too much hair covering garment
- Out of focus
- Family cat distracting and covers garment details
- Model not centered on the background



BAD:

- Too much background clutter
- Architectural features not parallel with the photo borders.
- Too far back from model, garment is less than 25% of photograph.
- Harsh lighting, hard shadow



BAD:

- Background distracting
- Model's body distracting as the central feature.
- Harsh direct flash, hot spots

BETTER:

- Try a close up, show the garment front and lining, no interference of model
- Indirect strobe studio lighting
- No background visible, only garment





Having the model look at the camera or away...

- For magazine shots, product shots and internet sales, consider having the model “sell” the artwork by looking at the camera and engaging the viewer.
- For jurying images, where the juror has seconds to make a decision about your work, consider having the model look away from the camera and not engage with the viewer.



The 75% rule is difficult when it is important to maintain the 3x2 proportion and the subject is long and thin in the frame.

Don't forget to zoom in on the subject!

Cropping is everything!

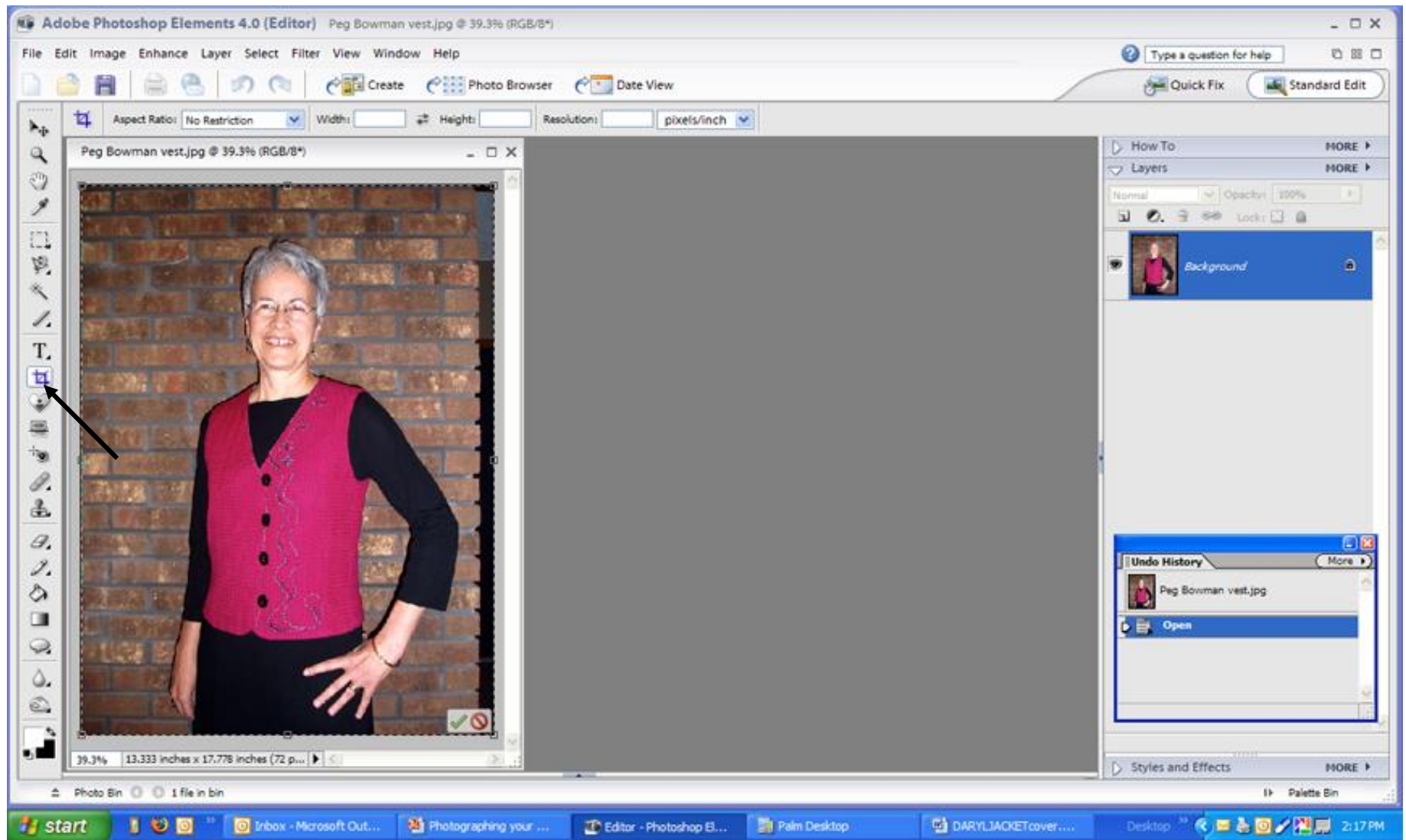




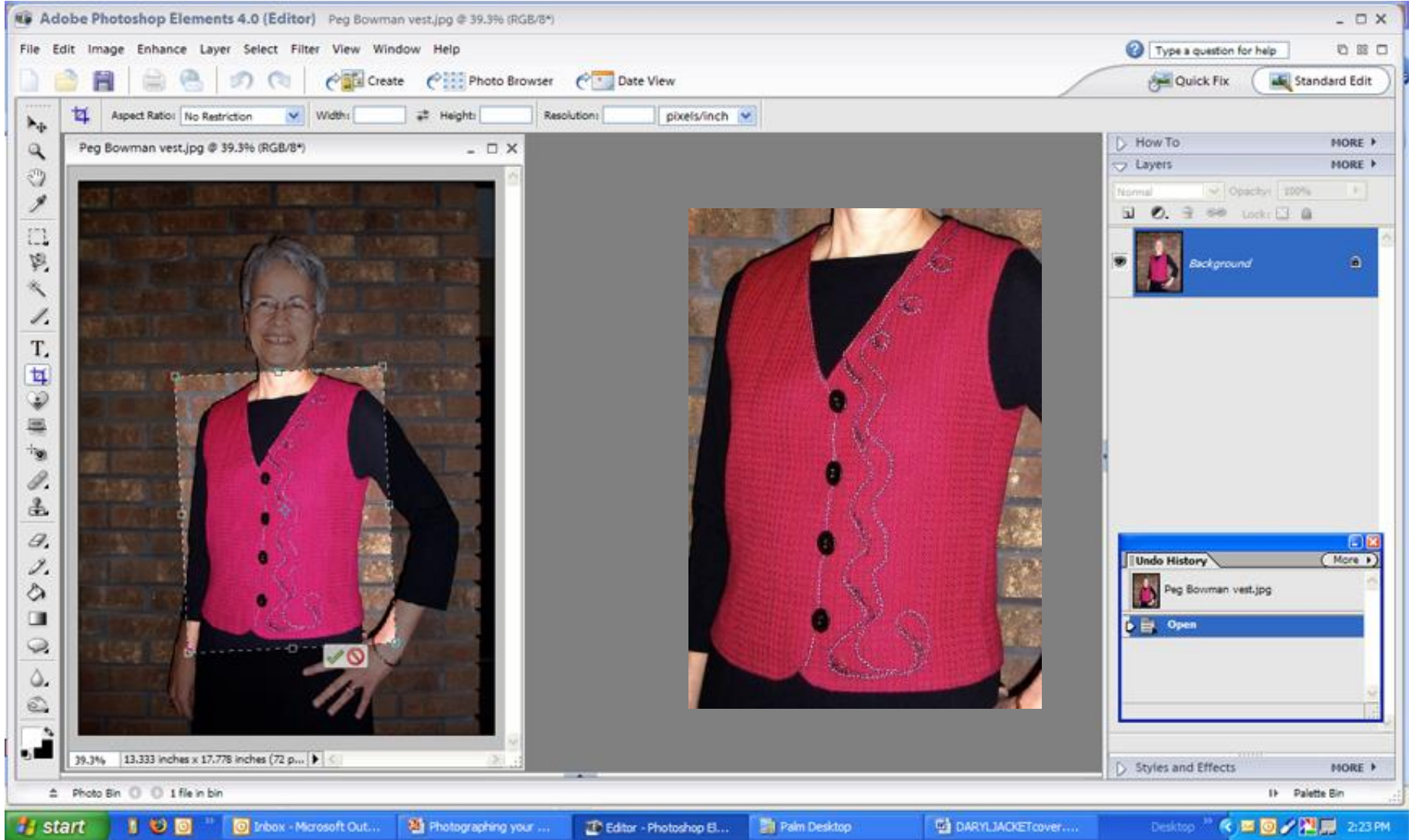
Vest by Peg Bowman Photo by Rick Bowman

Never underestimate the value of the CROP tool! Image is also tilted to give a bit more animation





To crop an image while keeping the same proportions, select the Crop tool, start in one corner of the image, click and drag the marquee to the opposite corner. Marching ants will appear around the image.



Hold down the SHIFT key while grabbing a corner handle. Move the corner in towards the center of the image, the crop boundaries will maintain the same proportion as the original image. Frequently reposition the crop window until the desired crop is achieved. The image can be tilted or rotated to enhance the pose.

BACKGROUNDS MATTER!





SIMPLE BACKGROUND
NO DISTRACTIONS!





Tip: Turn off the date/time feature!

A typical “artistic” shot, an attempt to create an artwork out of an artwork.

The following series shows the evolution of the photo of a vest, the photographer kept on trying after feedback on each shot.



Too skewed,
keep it simple



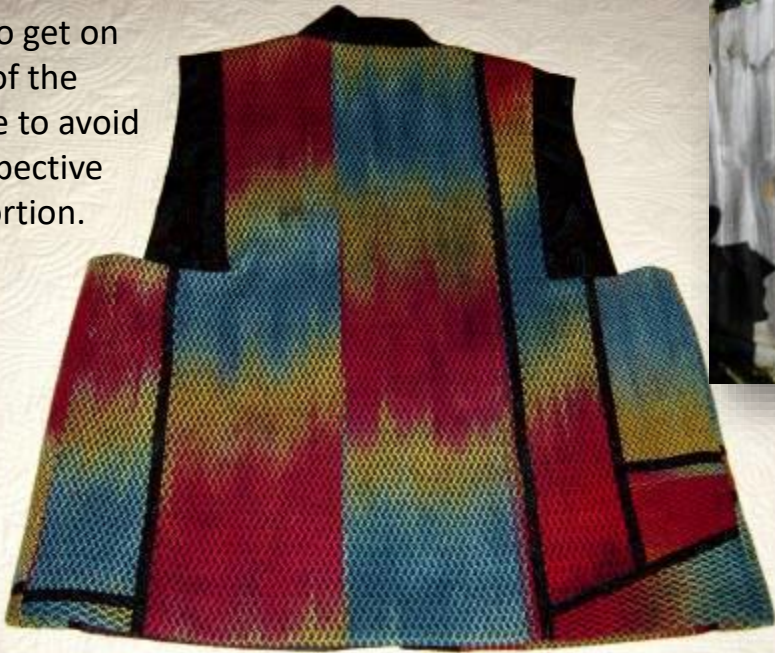
Even if you are
attempting to
show the lining.





Watch for any unnecessary debris in the photo, planned or unplanned. Wire hangers are ugly, but easy to erase in Photoshop.

Try to get on top of the piece to avoid perspective distortion.



Before/After



Better, but don't forget to turn the camera for a vertical shot!



With a point and shoot
digital Nikon camera, no
flash, overcast, outdoors.

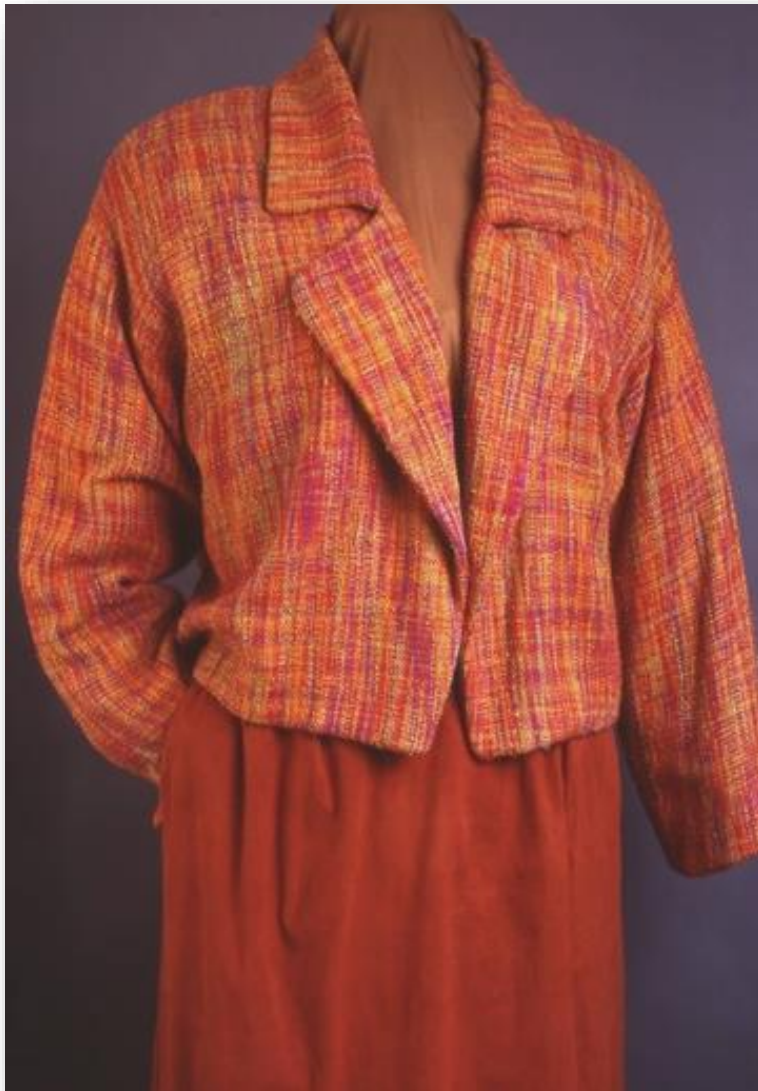


With studio strobe
lights and an SLR
digital Nikon camera.
Photo grey backdrop.



With a point and shoot
digital Nikon camera with
flash. On a dressform, no
backdrop.





Consider shooting the garment on a dressform (left) or on a body with the face and hands in black, cropped close so no body is visible (right). The lower camera angle on the right shows the volume of the garment.



A garage, photo backdrop, strobe lights and umbrellas to produce even indirect light, and a digital camera. Use a tripod to support the camera.



- Studio strobe lighting, umbrellas, a graduated backdrop and a dressform.

- Also note the distance the tripod sits from the subject. Use the zoom lens feature to bring the subject closer. Colors will render truer when the camera is further away.





Roll out a large photo
backdrop for a seamless look.



The further away the work sits from the background, the less shadow is produced from the lighting.

Note: Hanger erased in Photoshop.





Same
photo of
jacket!



Use Photoshop to insert a gradient
background.

Savage
Widetone Seamless Paper
Background - 53"x 12 yds. - #12
Studio Gray \$21.50 from B&H
Photo



Gradient Background done in Photoshop



Photo by Ralph Gabriner



Gradient Background done in Photoshop



Flotone Graduated Background - 43x63" - Thunder Gray about \$70. from B&H Photo

Be careful of fabric backdrops and fringe! Messy fringe and ripples in the backdrop can be distracting.





One of the joys of Adobe Photoshop® Elements is the ability to simulate a professional graduated background. Use the Magic Wand tool to Select the background. The background will now have marching ants around it.



Use the Gradient tool to fill in the selected area. Deselect the background, and now – instead of a wrinkled sheet, you have the look of a professional graduated background.

Simplicity in the shot,
Flotone Graduated
Backdrop, studio strobe
lighting.

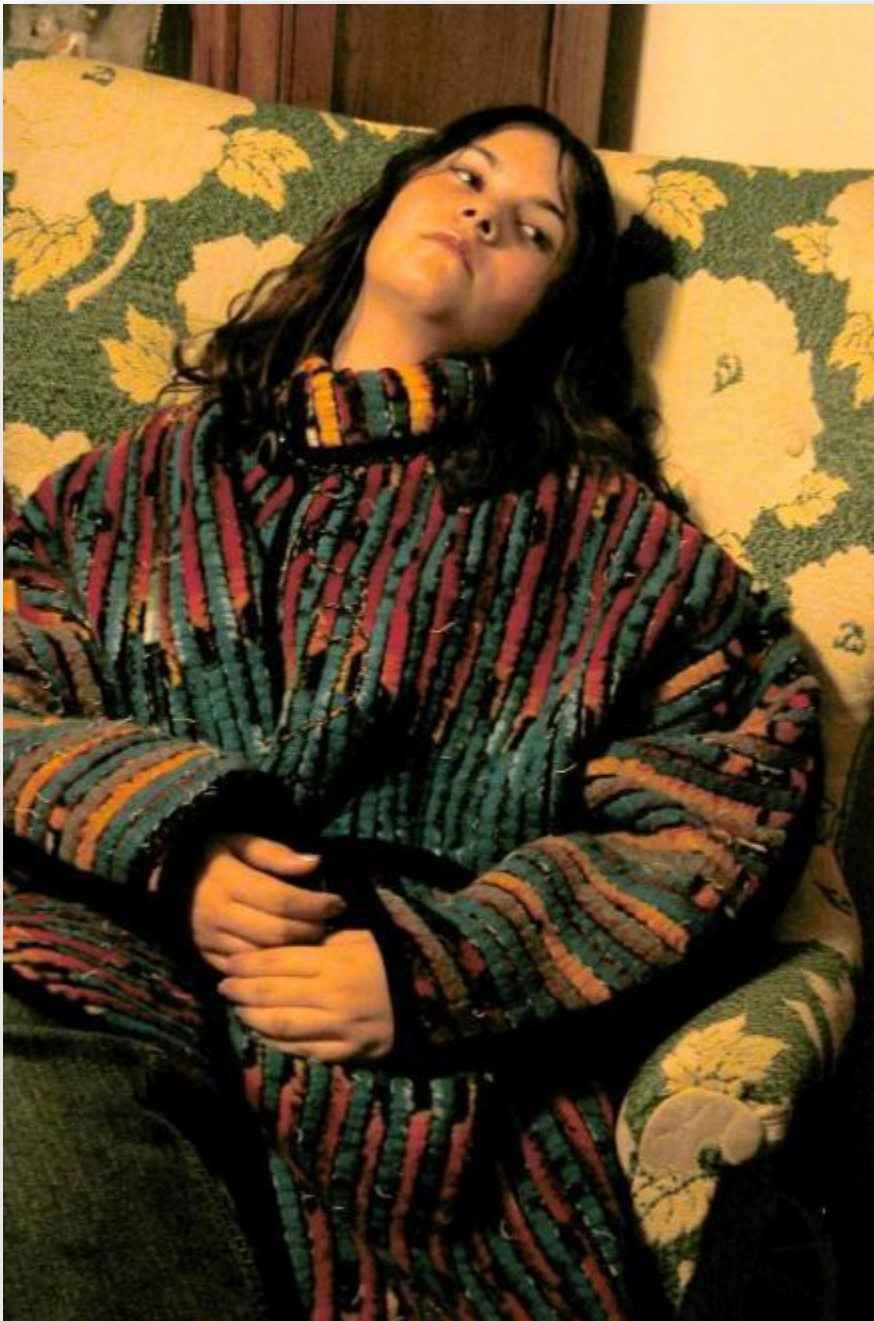


Angle of shot chosen to
show volume. All three
pieces are circular in
shape.



LIGHTING

- Light temperature is measured in Degrees Kelvin. The cooler the temperature (as in incandescent lighting), the more orange the lighting appears. Think candle flame.
- The hotter the Kelvin temperature (as in fluorescent lighting), the bluer the lighting appears. Think flame on a gas stove.
- True daylight is between 5500K and 6500K.
- Traditional film cameras compensated for light temperature by using a filter over the lens. Most flash units are balanced for daylight.
- On most digital cameras, a White Balance feature allows the correction of the ambient lighting to most closely simulate daylight.



- Dramatic artistic pose. Garment detail is lost.
- Incandescent orange glow lighting, no flash used.



Jacket and Photos from Suzie Jenkins

Tight shot, fills the space well.

Orange incandescent cast to the photo

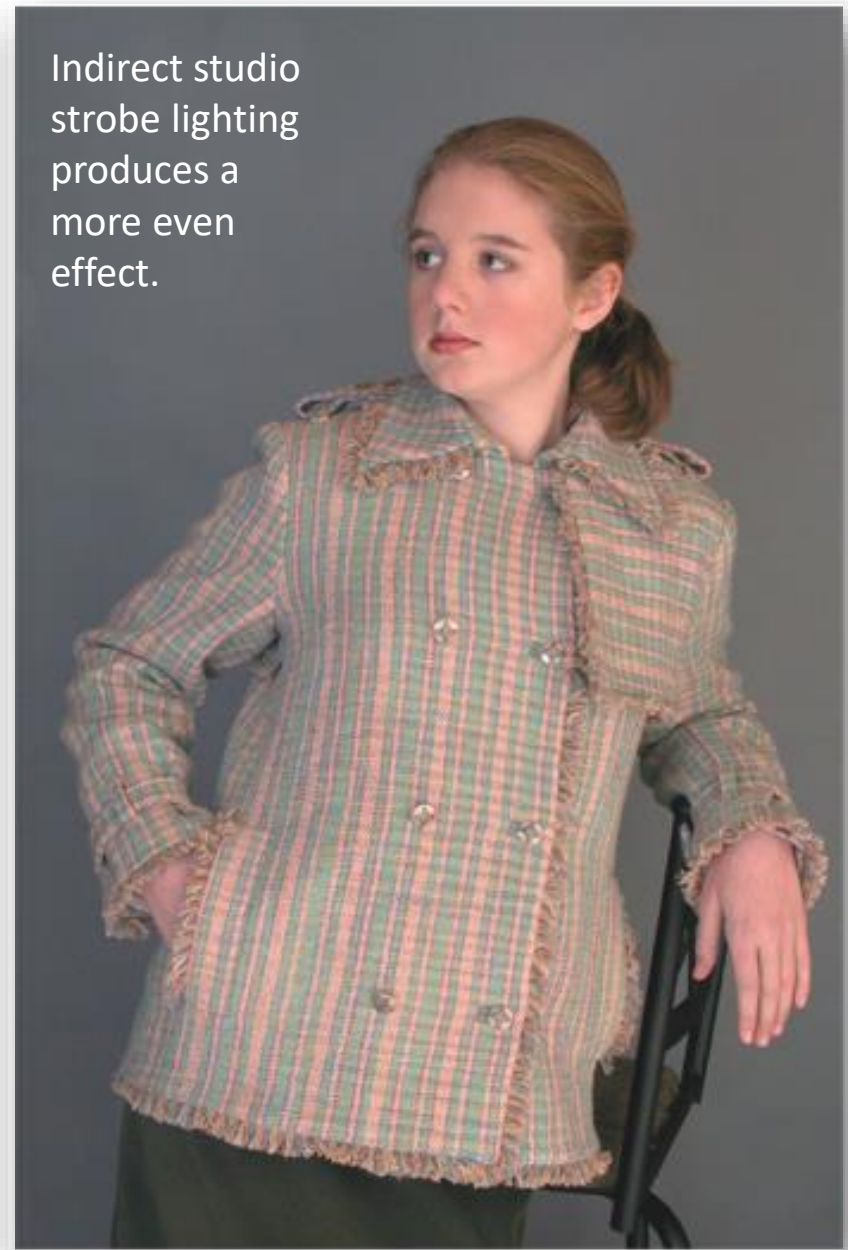


Color corrected using the
Photoshop Elements "Auto
Color Correction" feature.





Harsh direct
flash casts a
sharp shadow
and produces
hot spots.



Indirect studio
strobe lighting
produces a
more even
effect.



Ruana from Irene Leiban, photos Doug Dunlap.
Left photo: direct sun, washed out, busy background.
Bottom photo: less clutter, better color, nicely draped over hanger, giving the illusion of a body.





Outdoors, indirect light, additional fill light from GE Reveal bulb through a plastic box.



Indoors with a flash



Outdoors, indirect light



White paper to
fill shadows



Actual camera
position. The
photo was shot
with a zoom
lens.



GE Reveal bulb
through a semi
transparent
plastic box. Note:
GE Reveal bulbs
are only 2700K
and will give a
slightly yellow
cast.



OTT-lite bulbs are
better for this
job. They are
5000K, perfect
daylight.





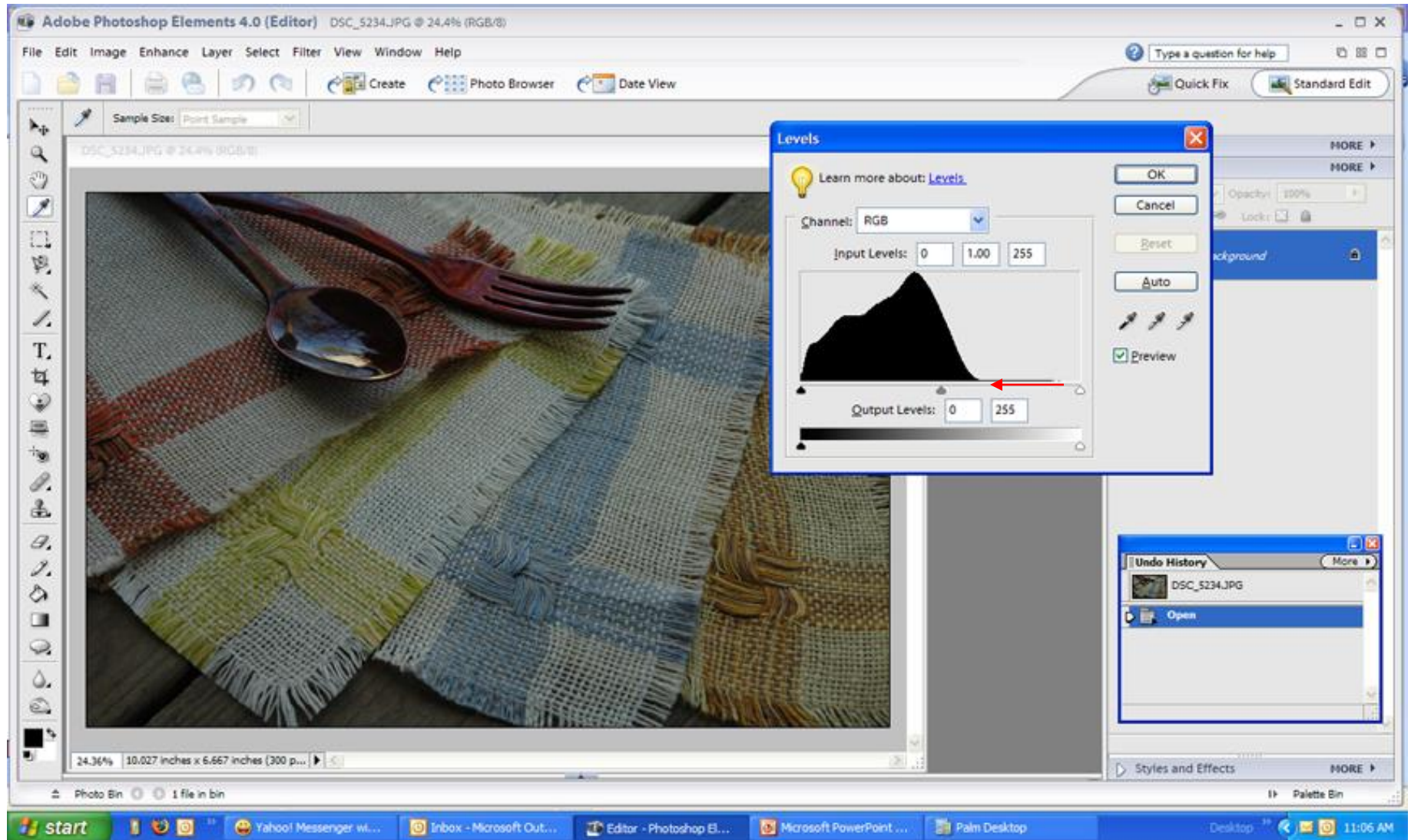
A pair of strobe lights with umbrellas set at 45° to the artwork, carefully adjusted to minimize shadows. Work is animated with fishing line, invisible to the camera.



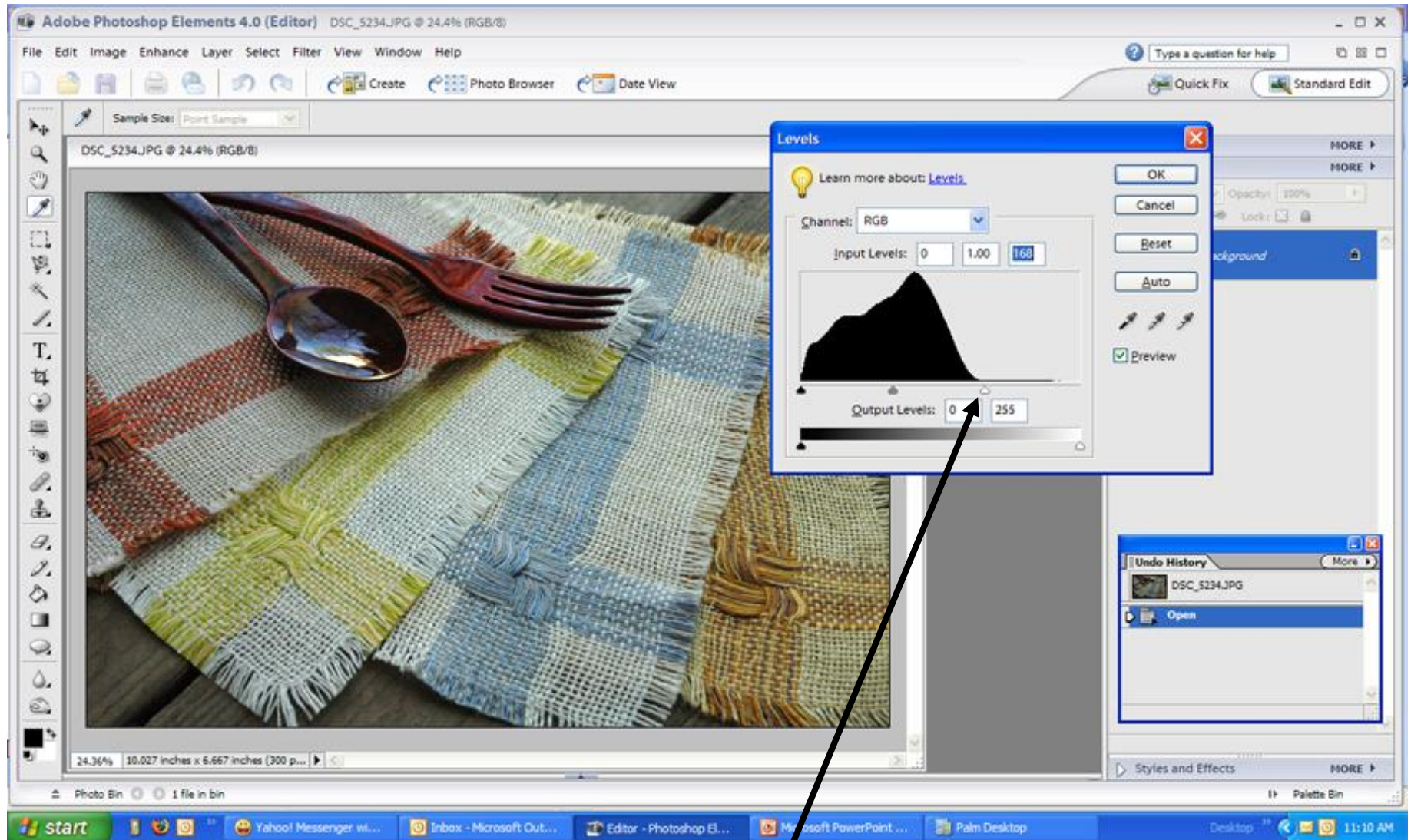


Giving the suggestion of the function of the textile, by using subtle props, allows the photographer to get in closer to record detail.

Be careful of reflections!



Learn to use a 'histogram', found under "enhance/adjust lighting/levels" or CTRL+L. The histogram displays the exact tonal distribution of the image. That would be the shadows, mid-tones, and highlights.



Sliding the white arrow towards the base of the “mountain” will give the photograph more balanced lighting by bringing up the “highlights”.



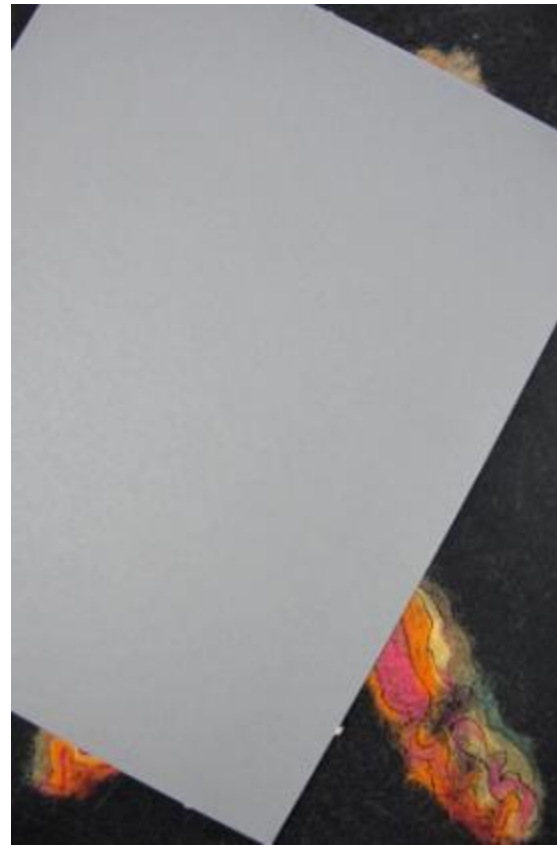
A simple adjustment of lighting, using a histogram, can make all the difference in the world.





Learn to use an 18% Gray Card. This little piece of cardboard can fool the camera's light meter to think that it is exposing for skin tone. Colors will be richer and more accurate.

The photo lower left shows the image shot with the normal camera auto settings. By inserting the gray card, and depressing the shutter part way, the light meter readings are locked into place. Simply remove the gray card and finish depressing the shutter. (This does not work with cell phones, yet...)



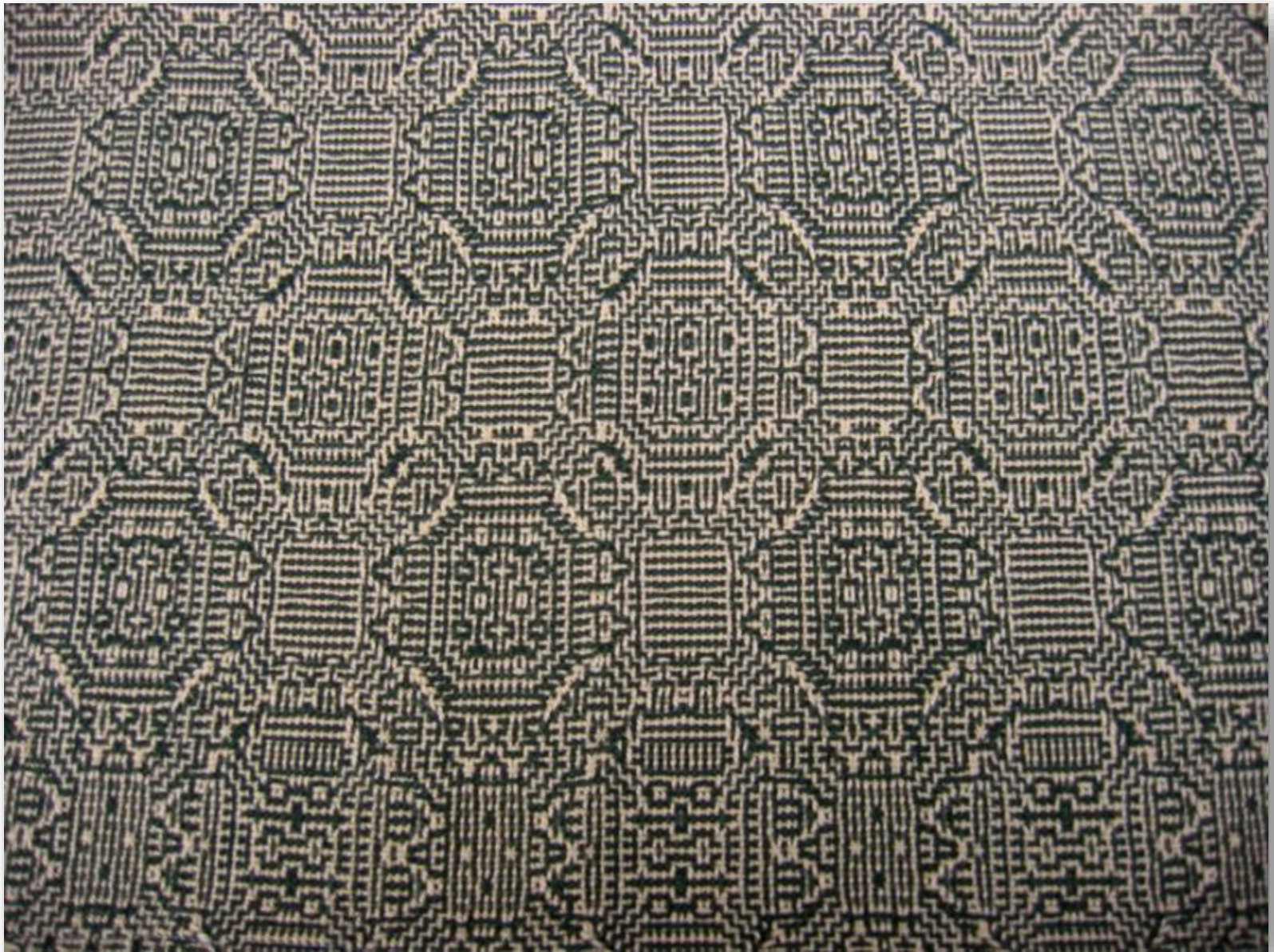


For quick emergencies when a gray card is not available, inserting your hand into the image and depressing the shutter button part way, can approximate the same settings if the skin tone is close to middle grey in value.

Photo on left shows the camera reading is flat and overexposed. By using a Caucasian flesh tone to substitute for the gray card, the camera meter is fooled into a richer photo with more contrast. Remove hand and finish depressing the shutter button.

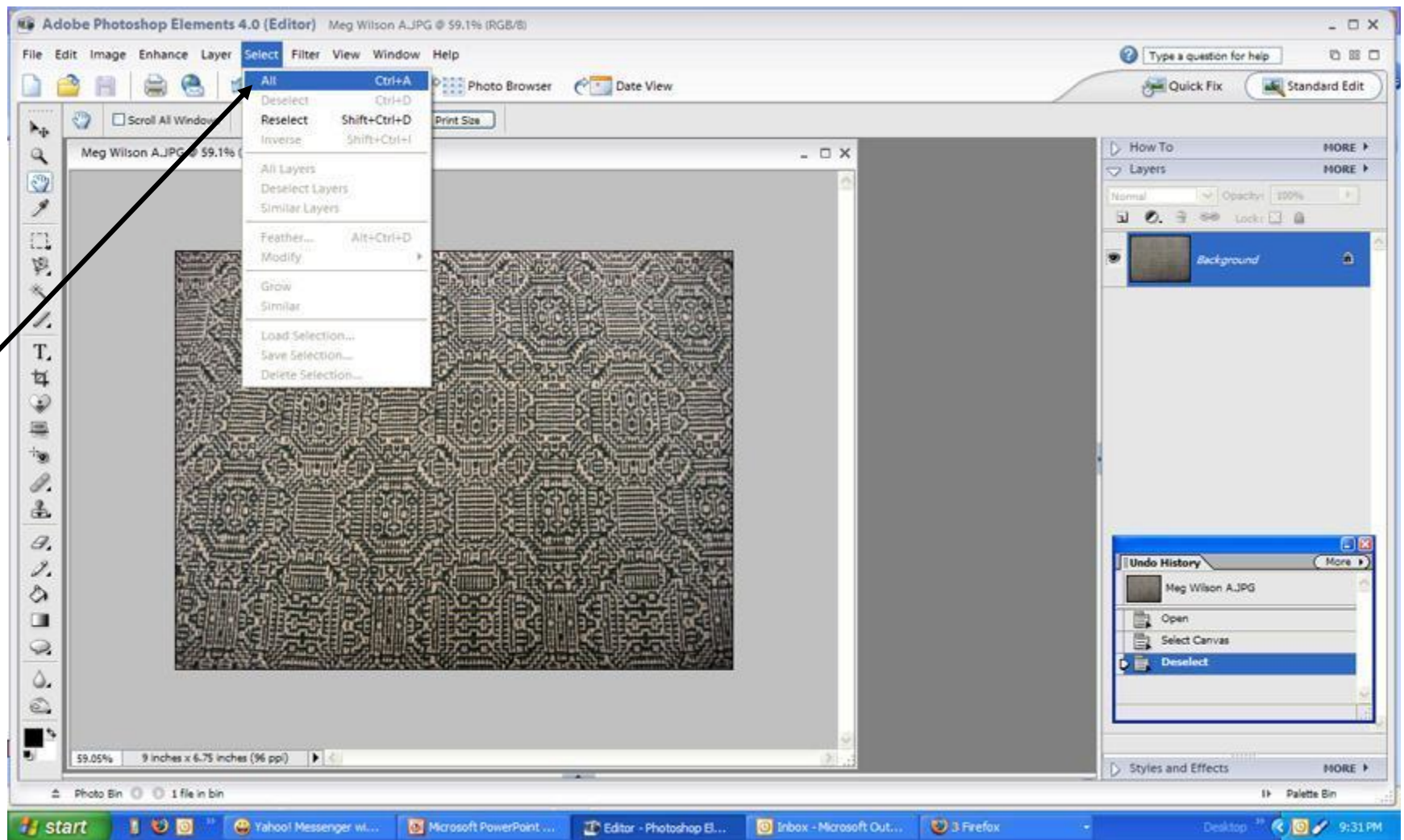
DISTORTED PERSPECTIVE

Square up those images!

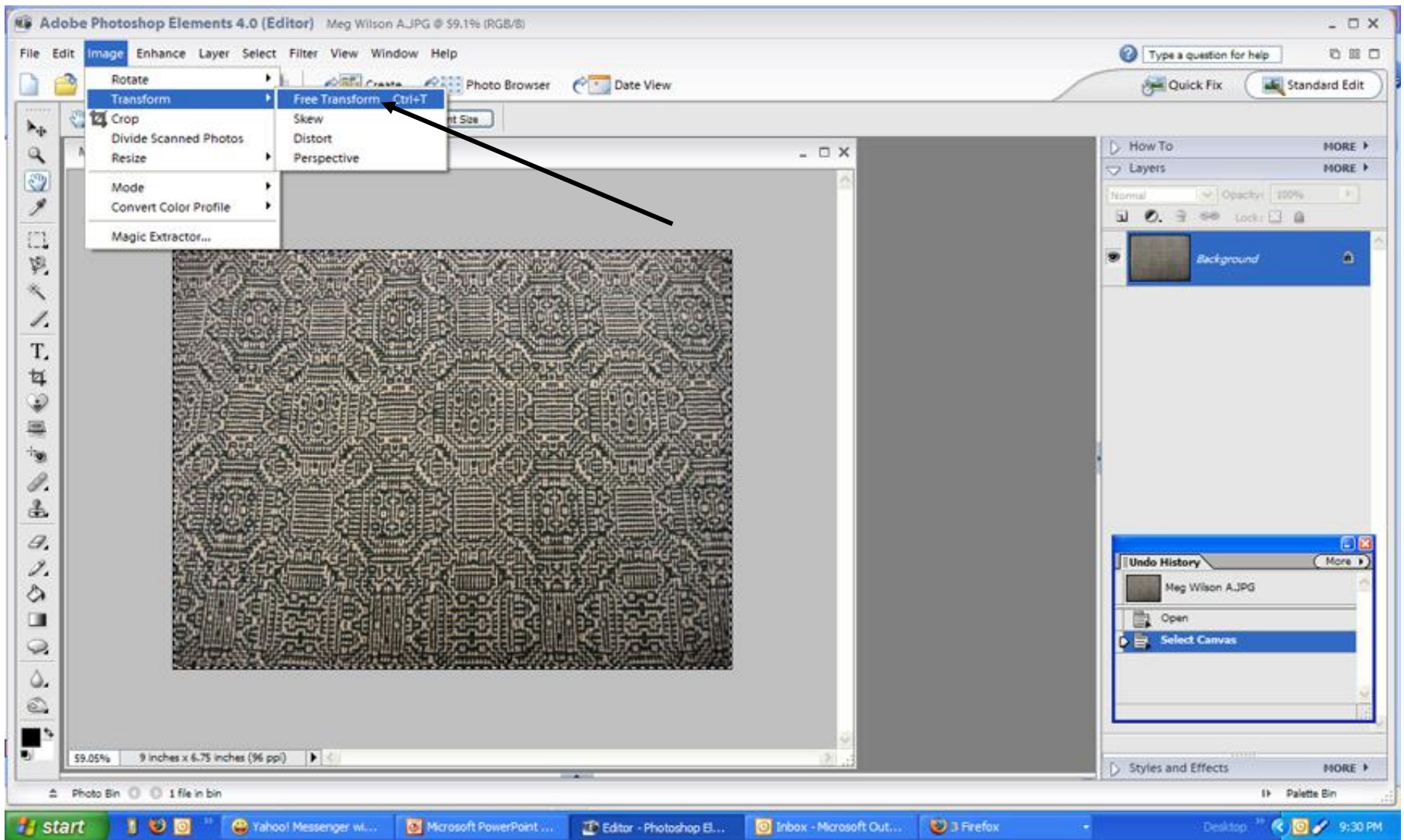


Note the perspective distortion.

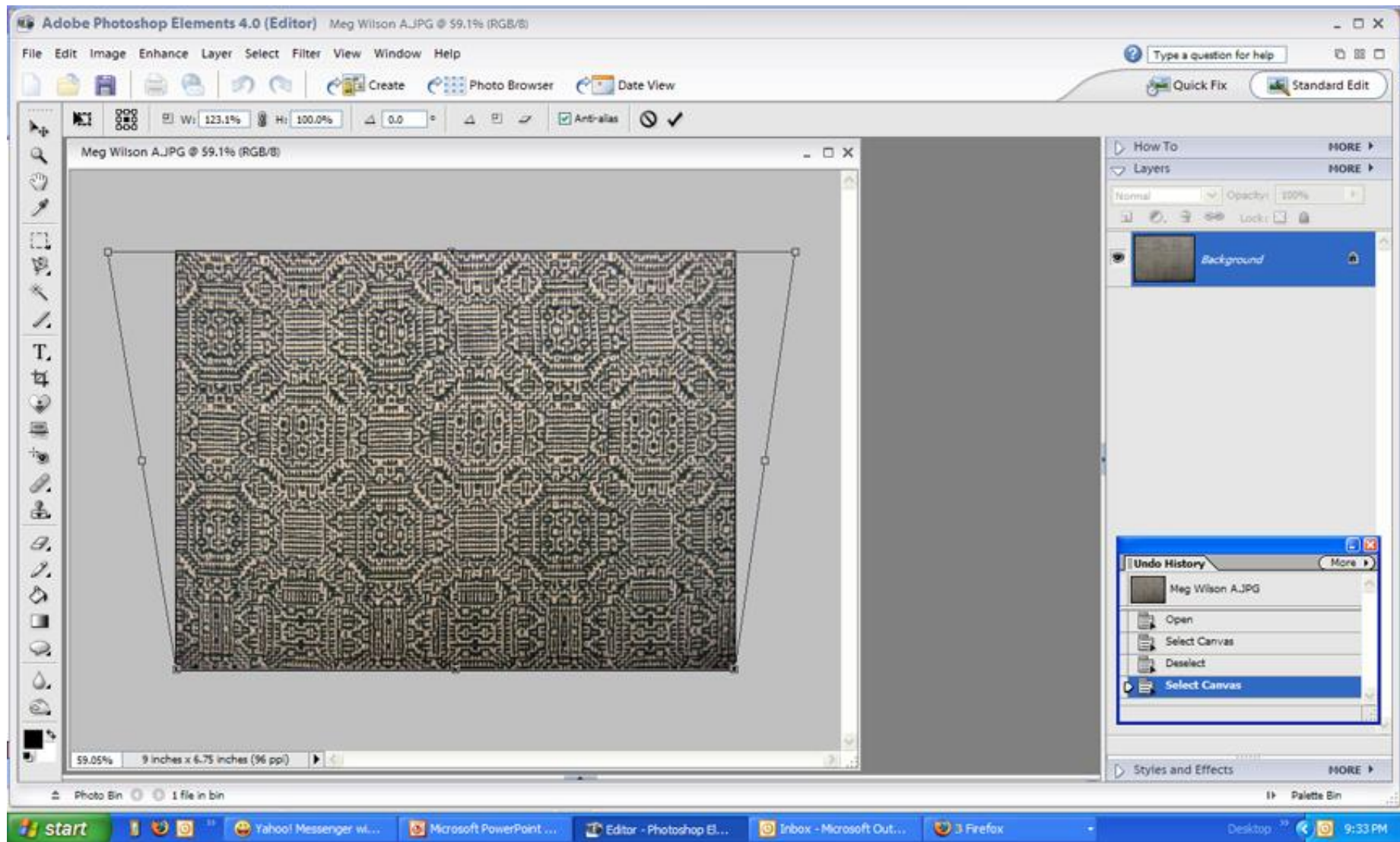
Photograph by Meg Wilson



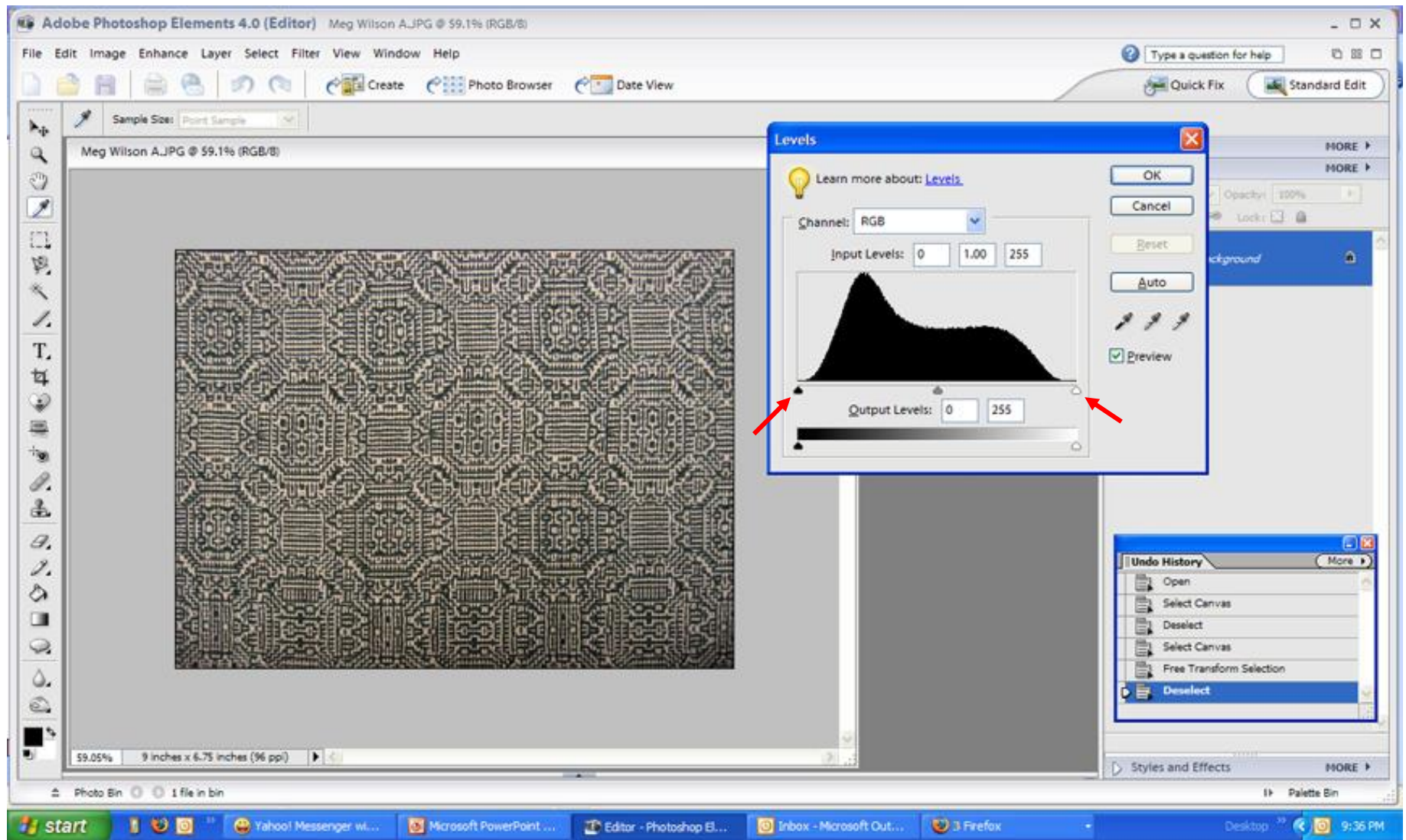
To straighten perspective, choose Select/All. The image will be surrounded by “marching ants”.



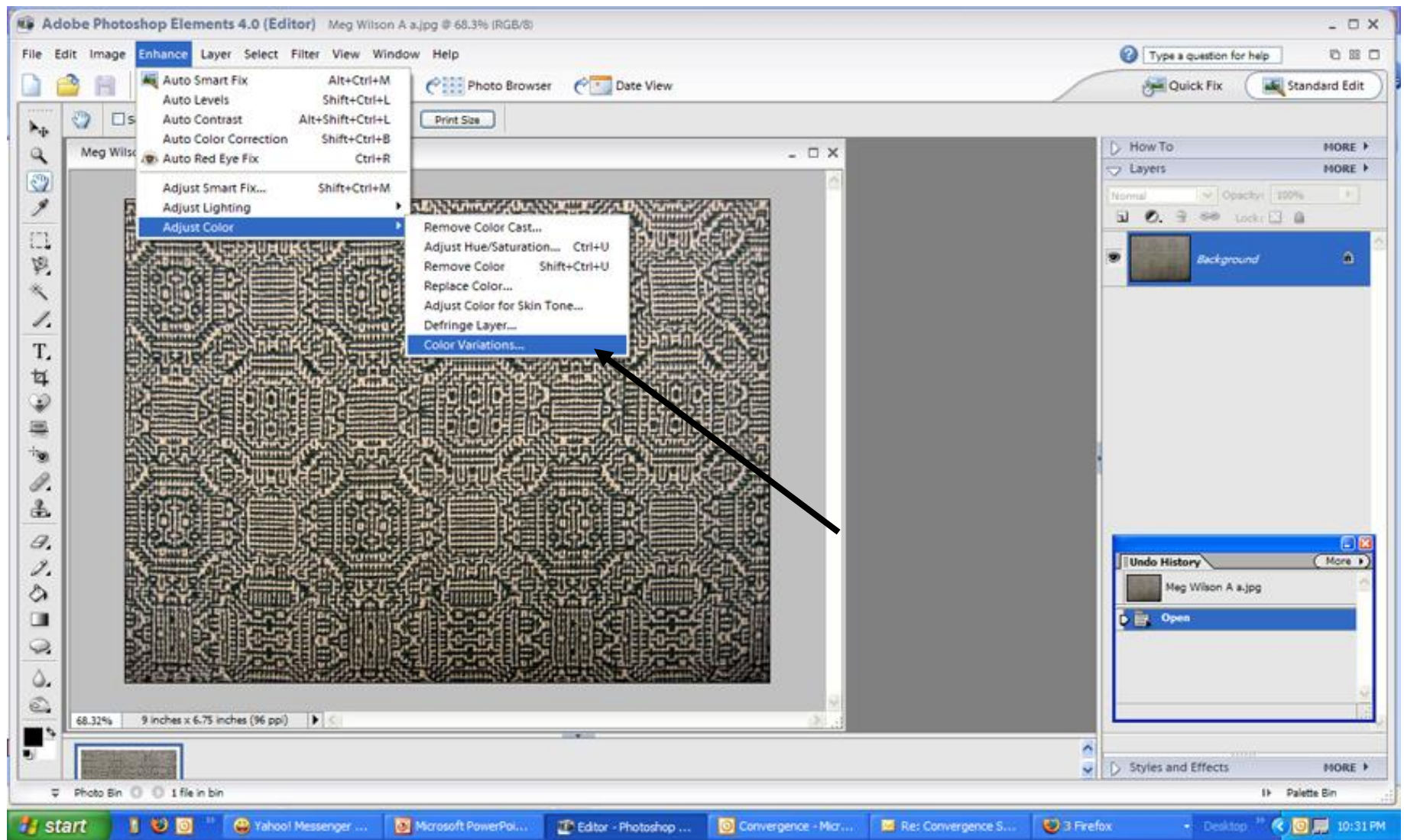
Use the Free Transform feature (CTRL+T) and small boxes will appear at the four corners of the image.



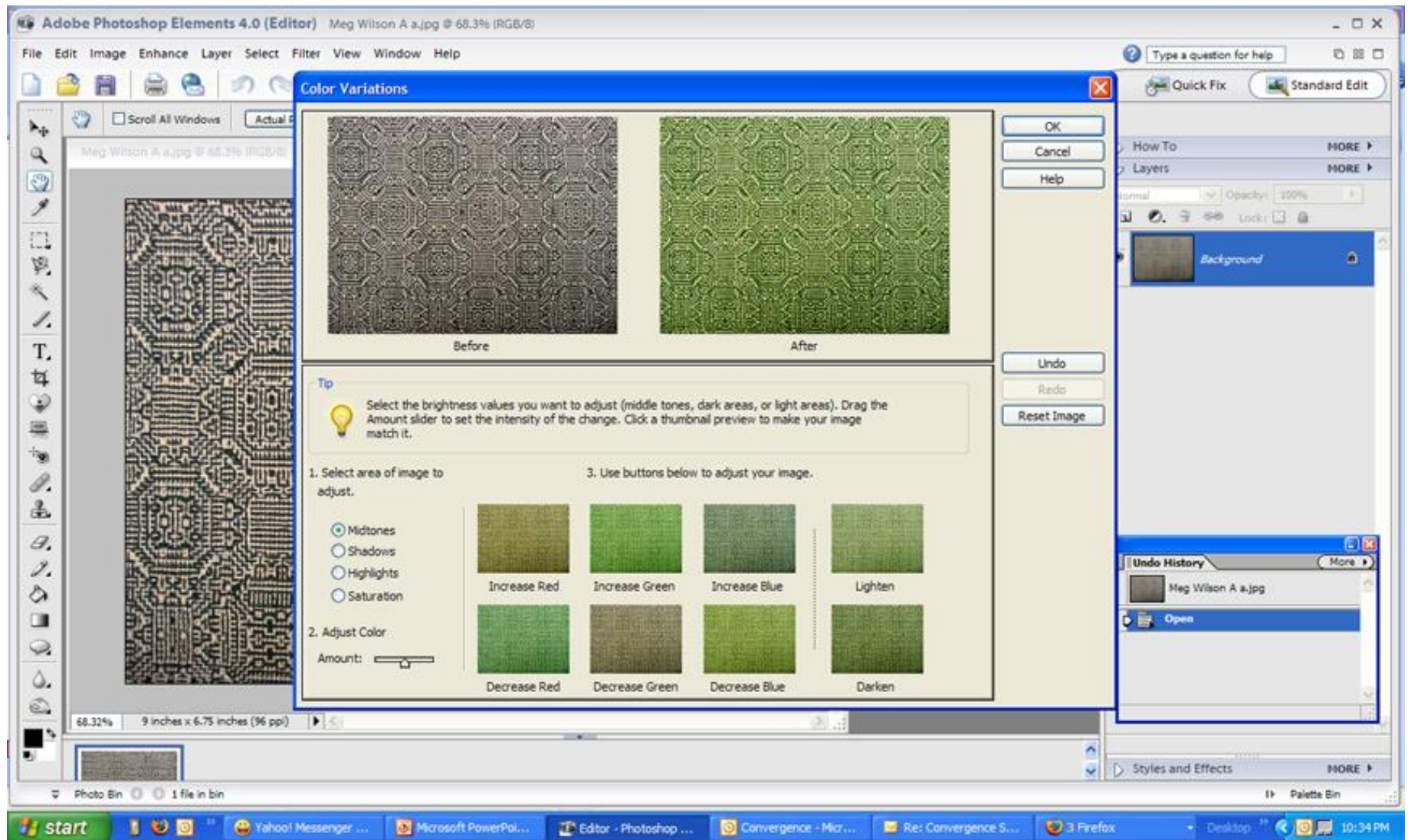
Hold the CTRL key and click and drag the corners individually until the image is parallel to the sides. Click 'Enter' to set the transformation, and Select/Deselect or CTRL+D to get rid of the marching ants.



A quick look at the histogram shows the need for some tonal adjustment. Move the shadows slider and the highlights slider closer towards the 'mountain'.



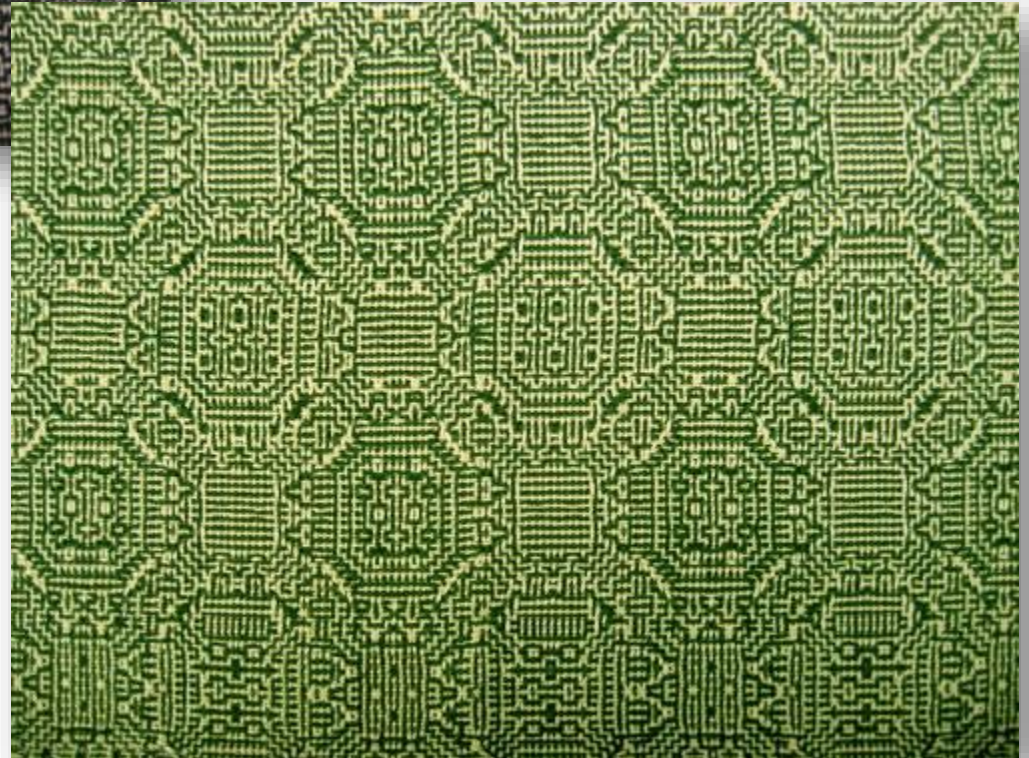
The colors are supposed to be “circuit board” green and yellow. You can adjust the color balance by selecting the Color Variations dialogue box.



By decreasing the Blue, and then decreasing the Red, the image becomes a better color match to the original item.



Before



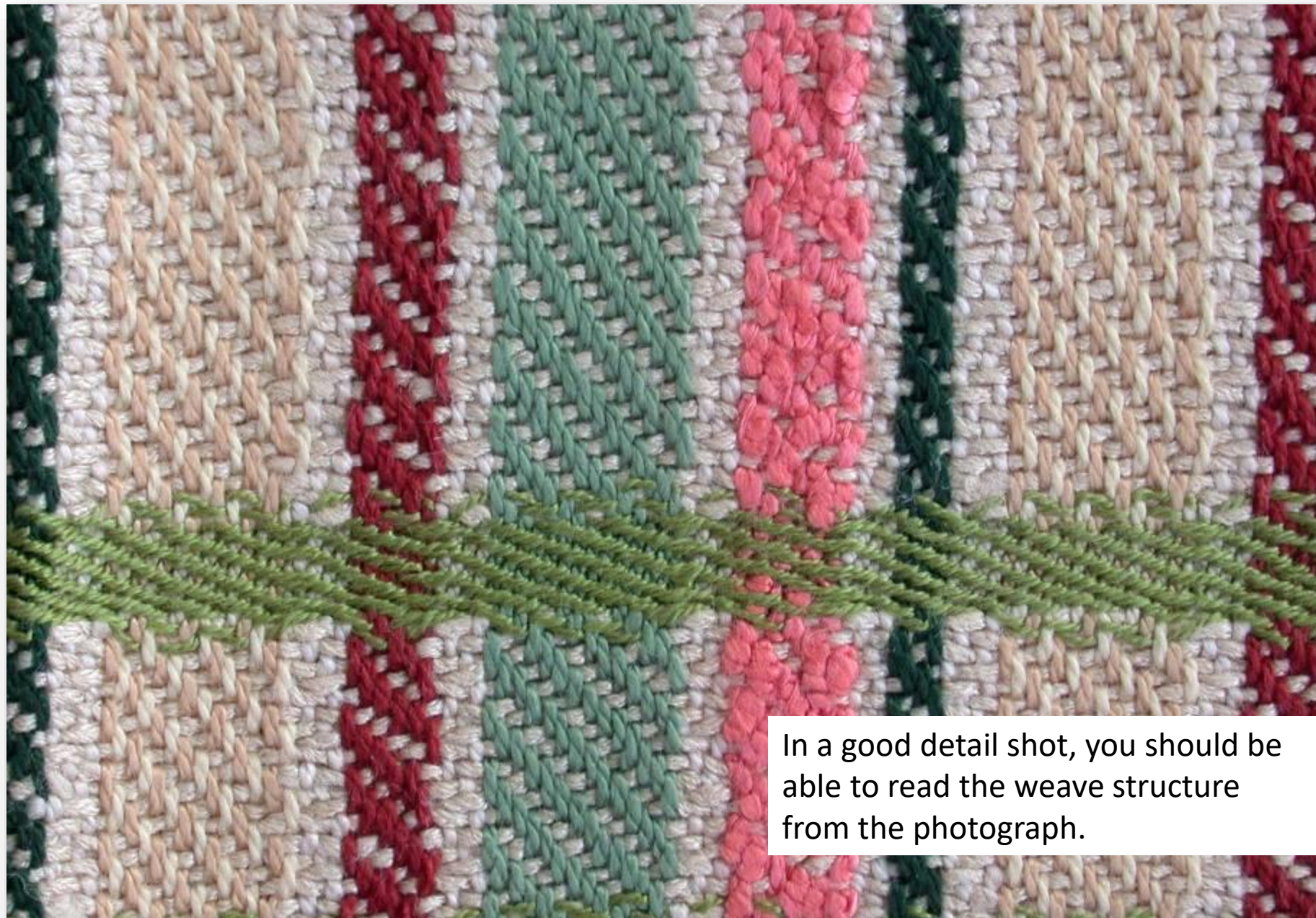
After

IT'S IN THE DETAILS

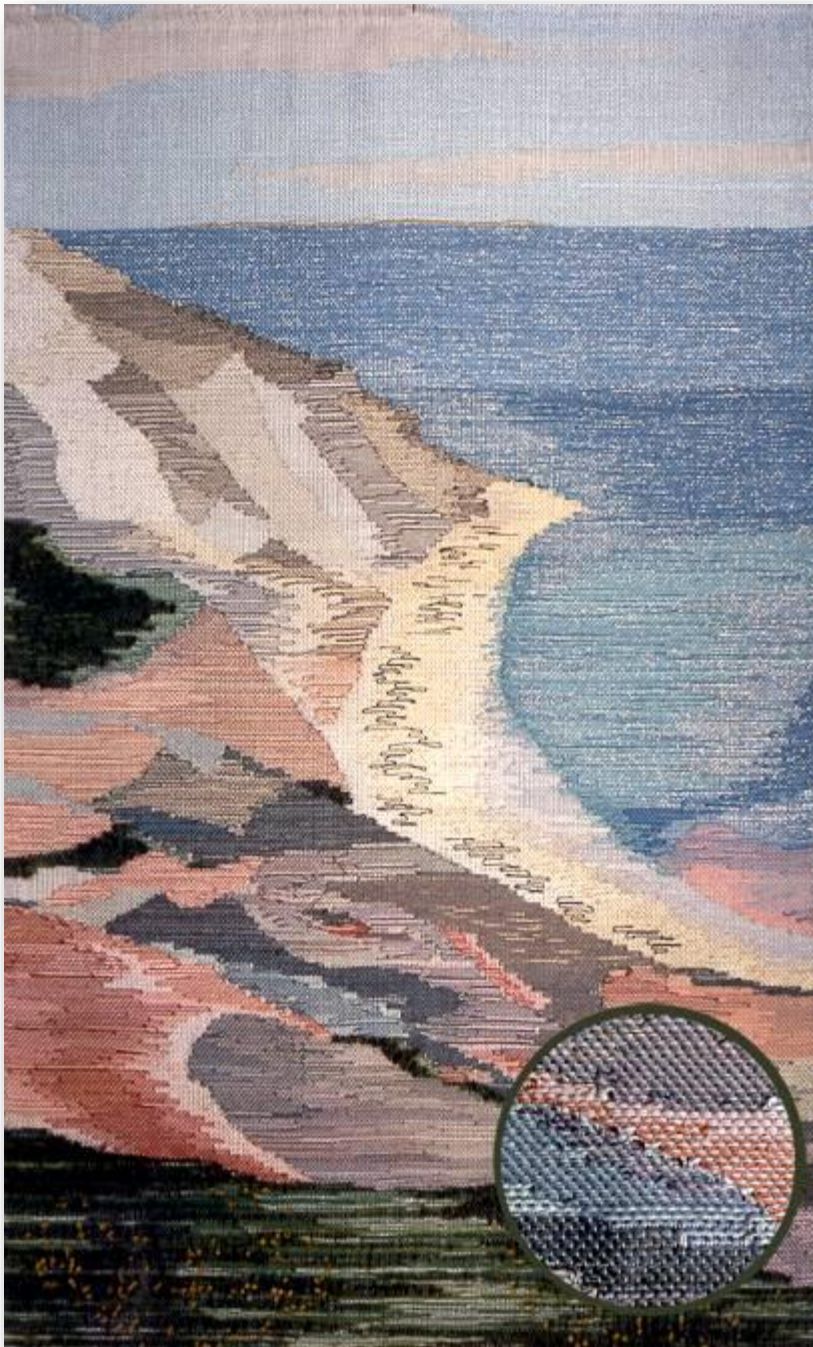
Use a close-up lens or the macro feature on your camera if you are photographing details.



Look for the macro tulip symbol on the camera.



In a good detail shot, you should be able to read the weave structure from the photograph.



An effective technique for showing the detail on a large piece, consider adding a magnification detail in a lower corner of the image.

This can work when limited to one slide or image.

This isn't suitable when the exhibit wants to use the images for publicity.

In Photoshop, select an area from a detail shot, using a circular marquee. Use the move tool to move the selection from one photo to another.

COMPOSITION IS
EVERYTHING



Product photography for eBay is a whole different set of issues!

A painted warp can look like colorful dog-poo, or a medical diagram of the transverse colon!

Or just a mess of string!



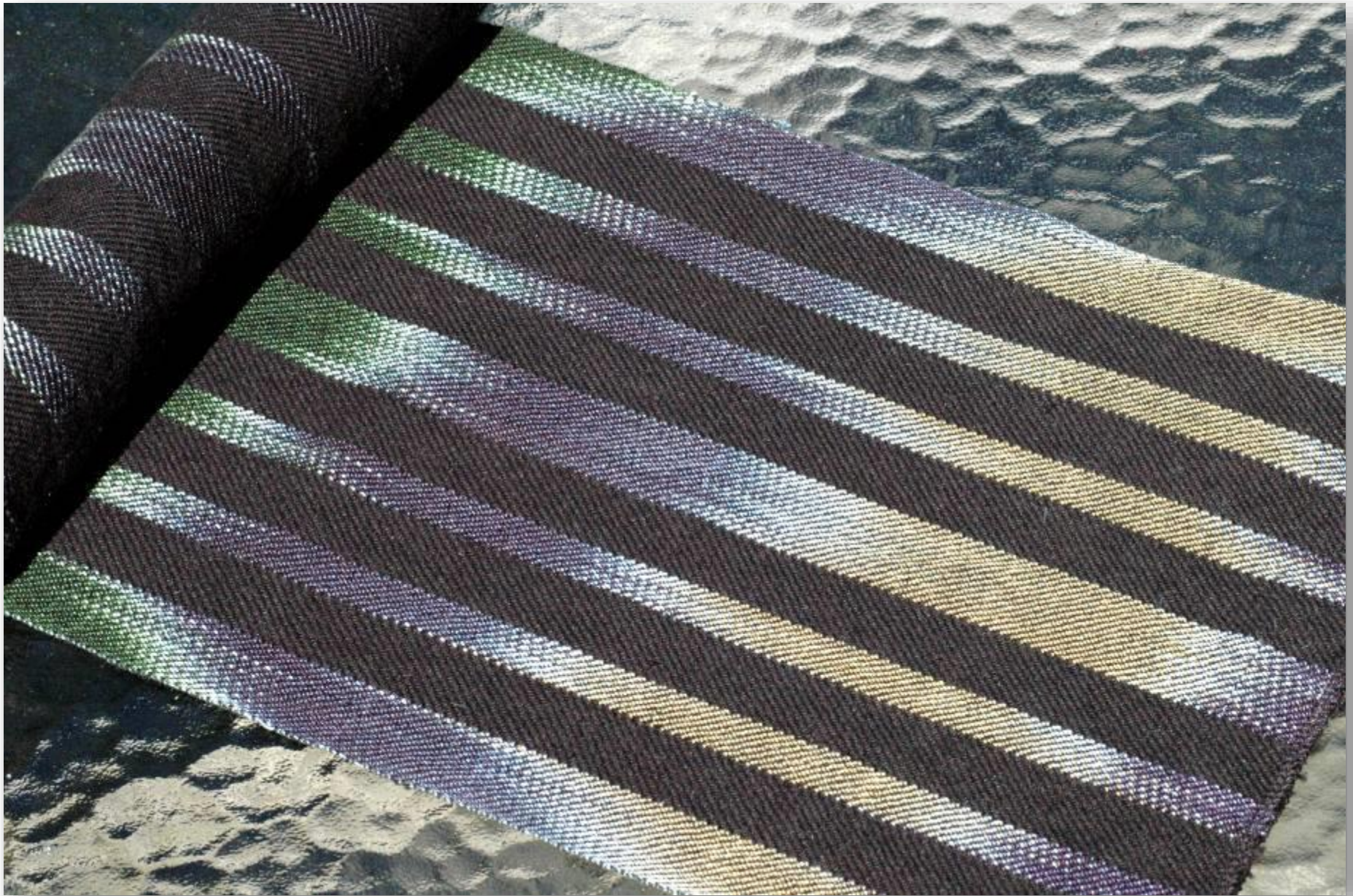
Keep it simple!

Tip: Use a large sheet
of mat board for a
quick background!



The pose is
important,
pay attention
to
composition.





Don't be afraid to use the diagonal!





Tablecloth and photograph by Rita Hagenbruch.



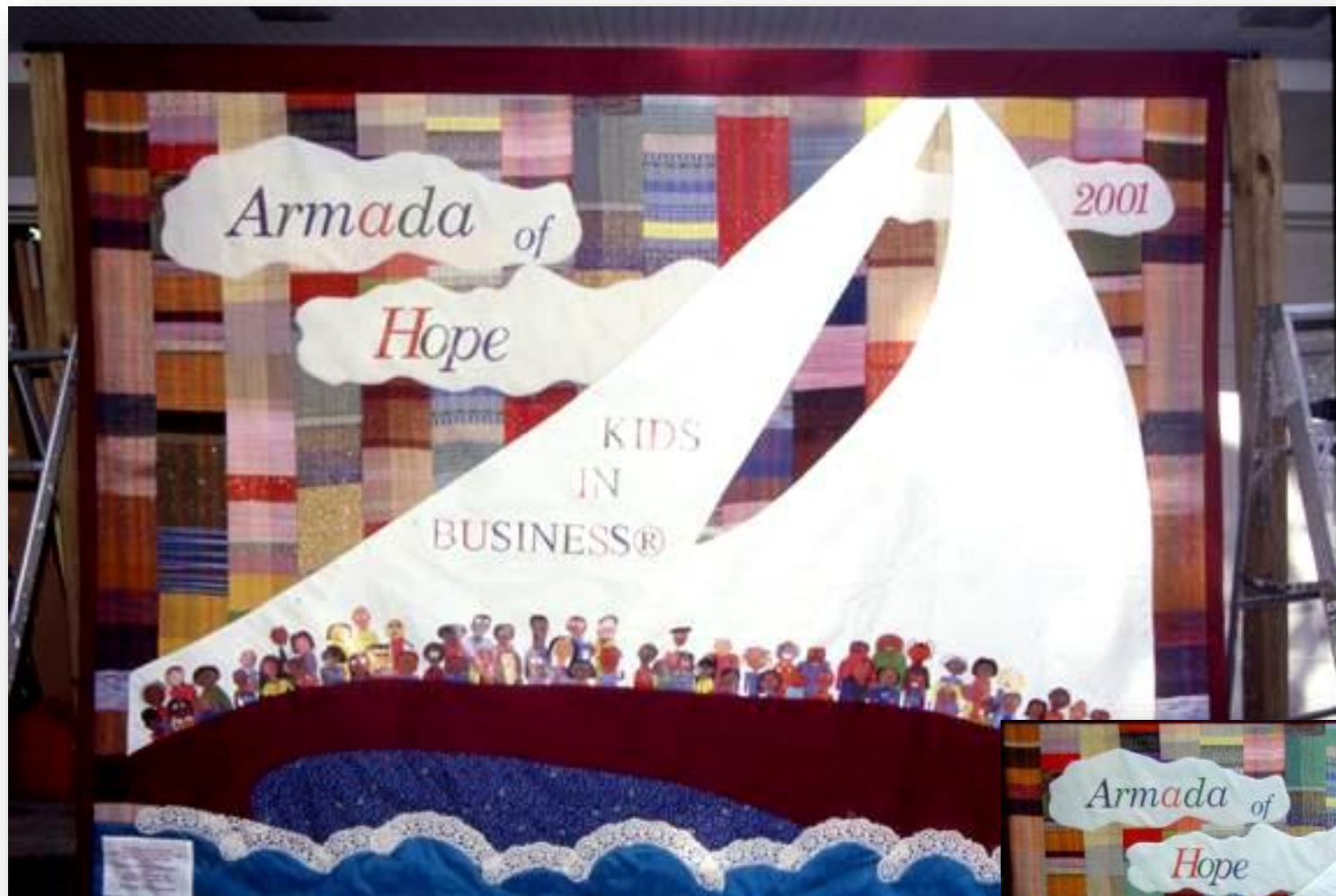
A window treatment shown in a window at night, the plant gives scale, and a sense of space.



Throw and Photograph by Rita Hagenbruch

Yardage is more difficult. Give the illusion of length by showing part of a roll or piling the excess in soft drapes at the bottom.

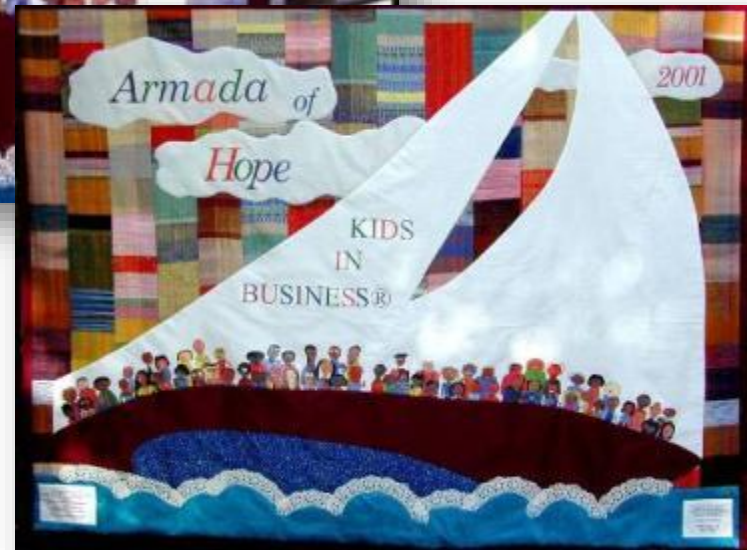




Direct or mottled sunlight can give unwanted effects. Try the north side of the house!

Quilts are the most difficult to photograph! Use props to hold them straight and square. Two ladders and upright fence posts can help. A temporary pole across the top keeps it square.

Cropping later in Photoshop and using the perspective distortion tool can square up any tapestry or quilt that is not parallel to the side walls of the photograph.



Creating Selfies...



- Use a well lit area
- Shoot into a mirror
- NO flash!
- Don't forget to flip the photo if you shoot into a mirror!
- Practice this. A lot!
- Take lots and lots of shots!
- Don't forget to use the zoom feature!

• Use a camera with a fully articulated display, like the Canon G12. Then you can see what the camera is seeing.



Create Step-by-Step process photos of yourself for tutorials, magazine articles and blogs.



- Use a tripod!
- Use a camera with a fully articulated display so you know what the camera is seeing.
- Use a camera with a timer.



RESOURCES:

Gamma Tech: Premium quality 35 mm slides from digital files :

<https://www.gammatech.com/>

American Craft Council: Choose a show, and click on Fashion/Wearable or Fiber/Decorative exhibitors to see some fabulous craft slides.

<http://www.craftcouncil.org/shows/past>

Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show <http://pmacraftshow.org/artists/> also a source for viewing fabulous craft slides.

Bob Barrett: Fine Art and Craft Photographer, NY area www.bobbarrettphoto.com Go to Jury Slides and see some excellent examples of Fine Craft Photography

B&H Photo and Video, for photographic equipment, lighting, backdrops, etc.

www.bhphotovideo.com

Product Photography Tips and Tricks, amazing amounts of information.

http://www.tabletopstudio.com/documents/HowTo_page.htm

BOOKS AND SOFTWARE

Photographing Arts, Crafts, and Collectibles: For portfolios, documentation, or selling on the web. 2007 by Steve Meltzer

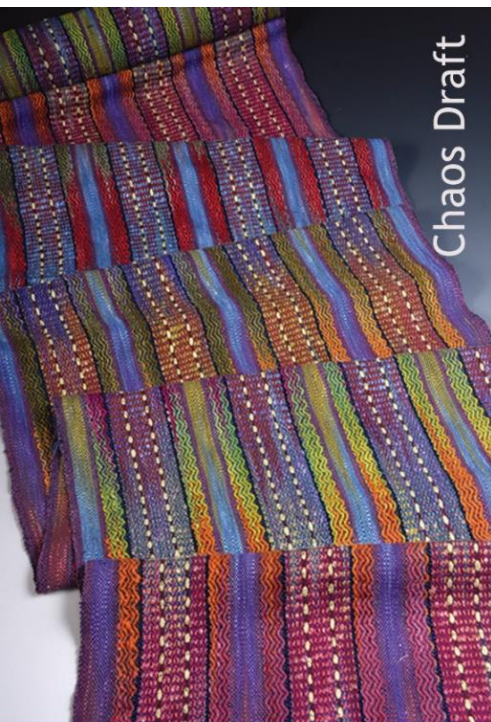
The Digital Photography Handbook: An Easy-To-Use Basic Guide for Everybody (Paperback) 2004 by Tim Daly

The Digital Photography Book Series 2012 by Scott Kelby

Adobe Photoshop Elements 14 (September 2015), about \$70.

There are numerous books and tutorials available for all Photoshop products, check Amazon.com for current offerings, in addition, excellent online tutorials are available for most current software, including all Adobe products, at www.lynda.com. Monthly or yearly subscriptions available.

Also try www.udemy.com for Photoshop tutorials. Udemy offers frequent sales ads to your inbox.



Chaos Draft



800 Zippered Vest



700 Tunic



400 Swing Coat

Now available! Digital PDF sewing patterns

SEWING WITH HANDWOVENS

*Digital monographs, drafts,
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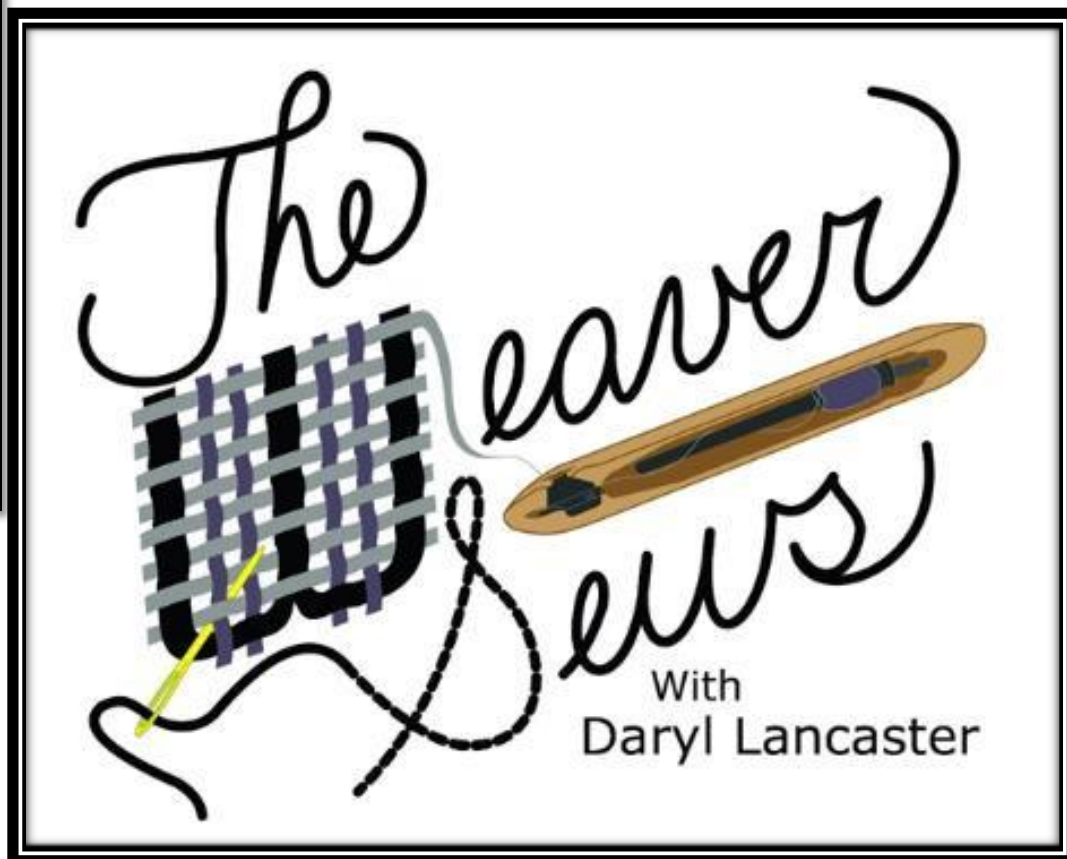


Blog post

<https://weaversew.com/wordblog/>

Website

<https://www.daryllancaster.com/index.html>



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To access the index for the YouTube Channel

<https://www.daryllancaster.com/TheWeaverSewsIndex.html>