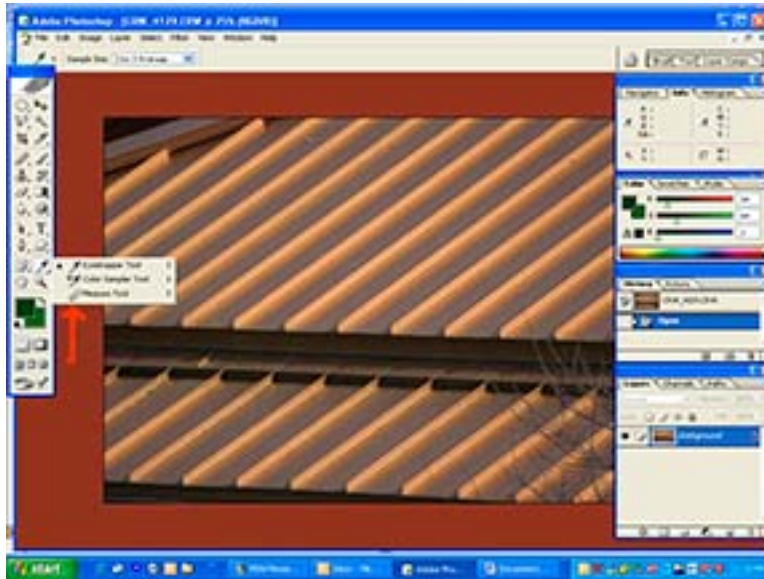


Leveling the Horizon Line in Photoshop

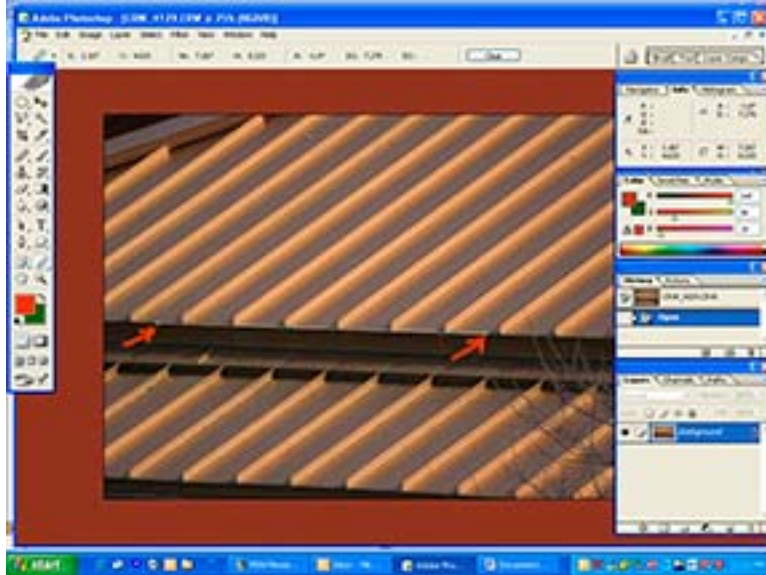
By Gary Ford based on Input from Gord Griffiths and Dave Giuliani

The best way to level the horizon line in an image is to shoot it level. This can be accomplished by using a tripod and a level if the horizon needs to be exact. However, if you take a shot and the horizon line is not level, PhotoShop offers several ways to achieve a proper horizon line.

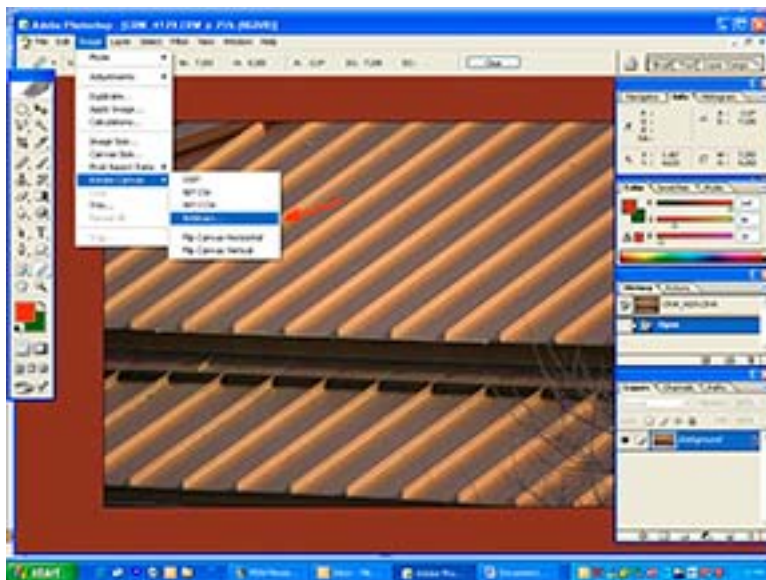
Gord Griffiths showed us the method using the measure tool. To access the measure tool, right click on the small black corner of the eye dropper tool in the tool bar.



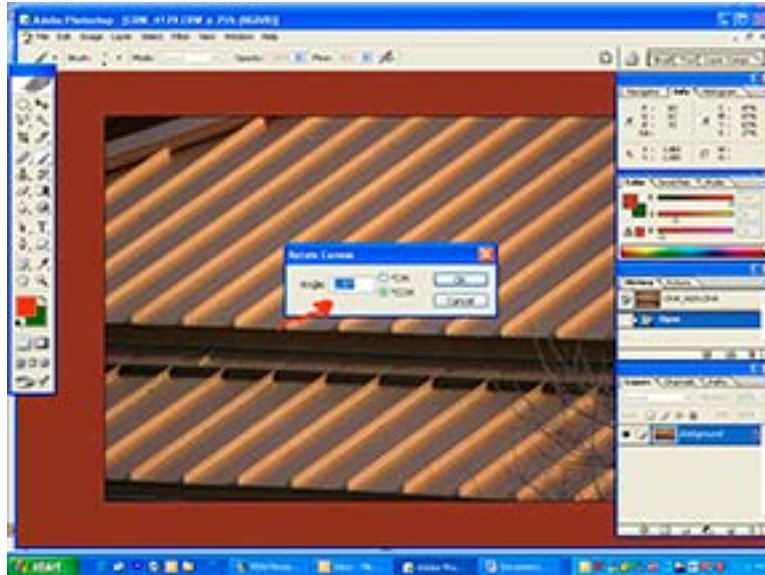
Click on the Measure Tool and then click on a point on the horizon that you wish to correct, hold your mouse button down and drag the line along the edge of the existing horizon line that is askew. When you reach a point substantially along the line, release the mouse button and you should see a white line with cross hatches at each end. If the line isn't exactly on the horizon point, you can click on the end of the line and move it to the point you want.



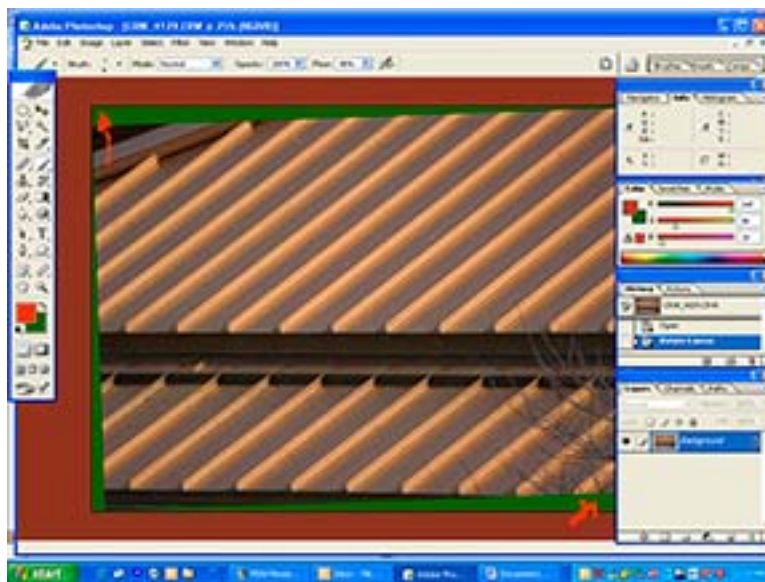
Now go to the top menu, click on Image> Rotate Canvas > Arbitrary:



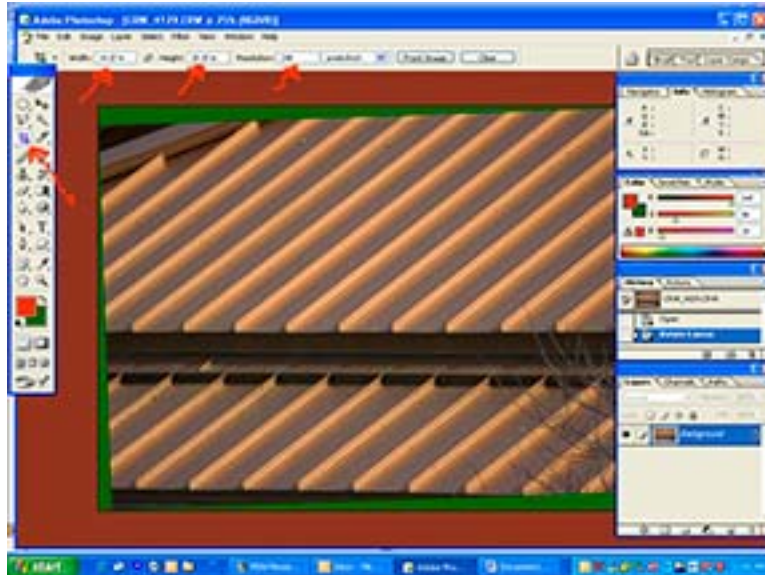
Once you have clicked on Arbitrary, a small window will appear that shows the number of degrees that Photoshop will rotate the image so that the line you placed on the image is exactly horizontal.



In this example, the program shows that it must rotate the image 1.97 degrees counter clockwise. You can type over and modify the number if you are concerned about the degree of rotation being proposed. If you accept the presented number, and click on okay, then PhotoShop will rotate the image that amount. You will see that the corners are now angled relative to the canvas.



The horizon line is now level but the image itself is not. To level off the image, we must crop the image. To Crop the image, click on the crop tool in the tool bar. At the top of the image, there are boxes where you can enter in the preferred crop dimensions and resolution or leave them blank and Photoshop will allow a free form crop relative to the current dimensions of the image. If you set dimensions, then Photoshop will only allow you to crop in those dimensions.



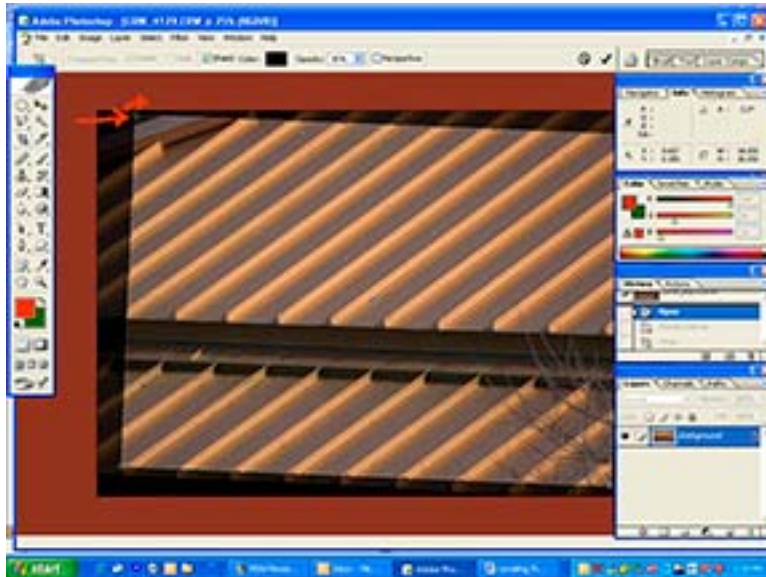
On the image, draw out the crop rectangle that you want for your image by clicking in the upper left start point and dragging to the lower right. When you are satisfied that you have maximized the amount that you wish to crop, right click on your mouse and then click on crop in the small window that appears.



This will leave an image with the desired level horizon. Dave Giuliani, who predominantly uses Photoshop Elements, shared a method that is easier to use but relies on your eye for level, as opposed to the more exact calculation that is done by PhotoShop.

In this method, you would use the crop tool on its own. On your original image, draw out the crop area you wish to retain. Then click on one of the corners of the crop such that

you see a curved two headed arrow. Holding your mouse button down, rotate the crop to the desired angle. You must rely on your own sense of what will create a leveled horizon.



When you think you have the level you want, right click on your mouse and click on crop. The crop will be applied and the remaining image leveled. The result is easier to achieve but not as exact as the use of the measure tool.

