How to prepare your files for competition using…

PHOTOSHOP CS6

Many thanks to Margaret Carter Baumgartner for the use of her portrait painting in this demonstration.

BEFORE YOU START…

Photograph your painting with a piece of white paper, a white index card, or a Photographer's white/gray balance card included in the frame of the picture. You will see how handy this tip is when you go through this presentation.
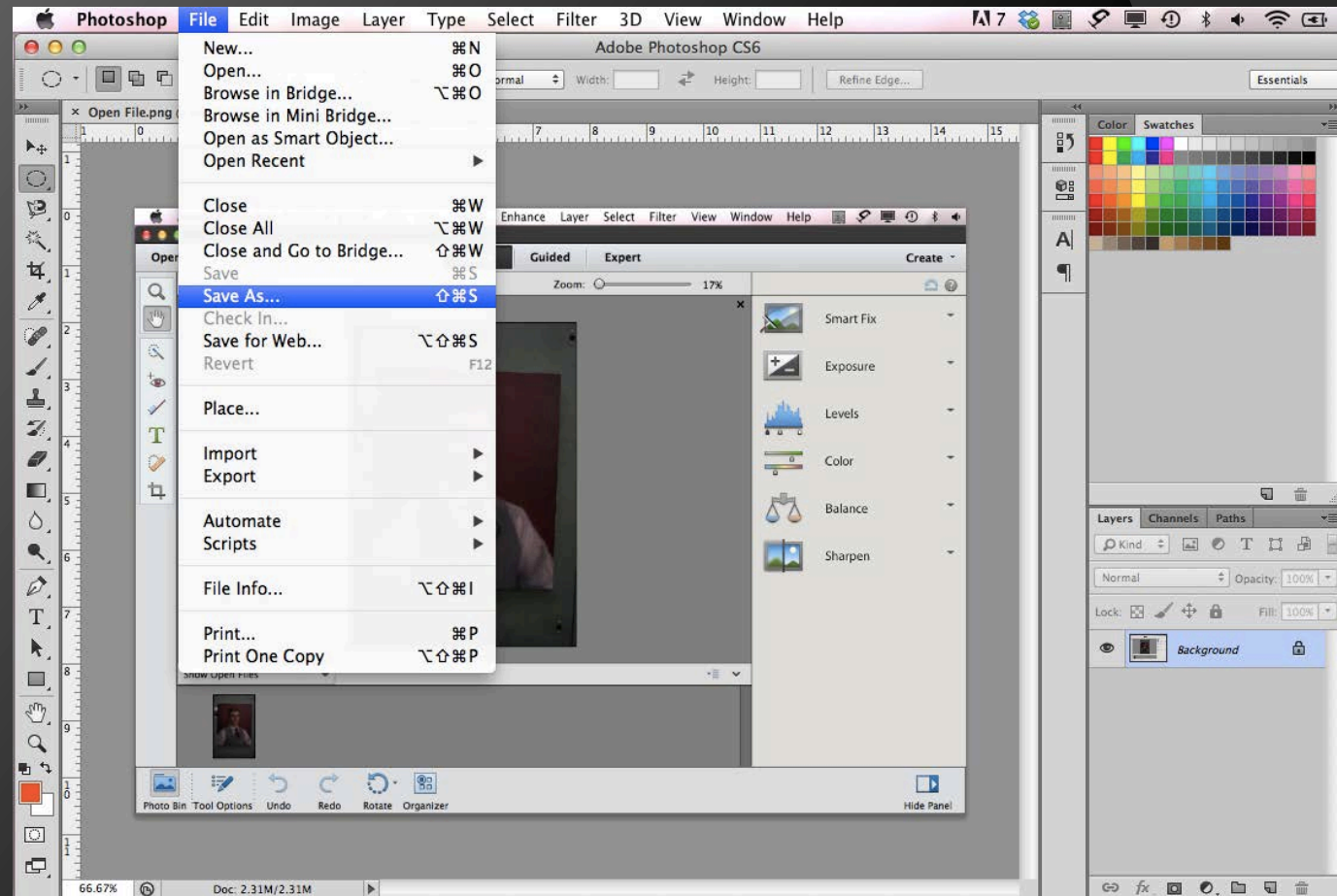
Open the program and file.

- Open Adobe Photoshop. Once the program is opened, go to the top menu, click on FILE and scroll down to OPEN and find your picture.
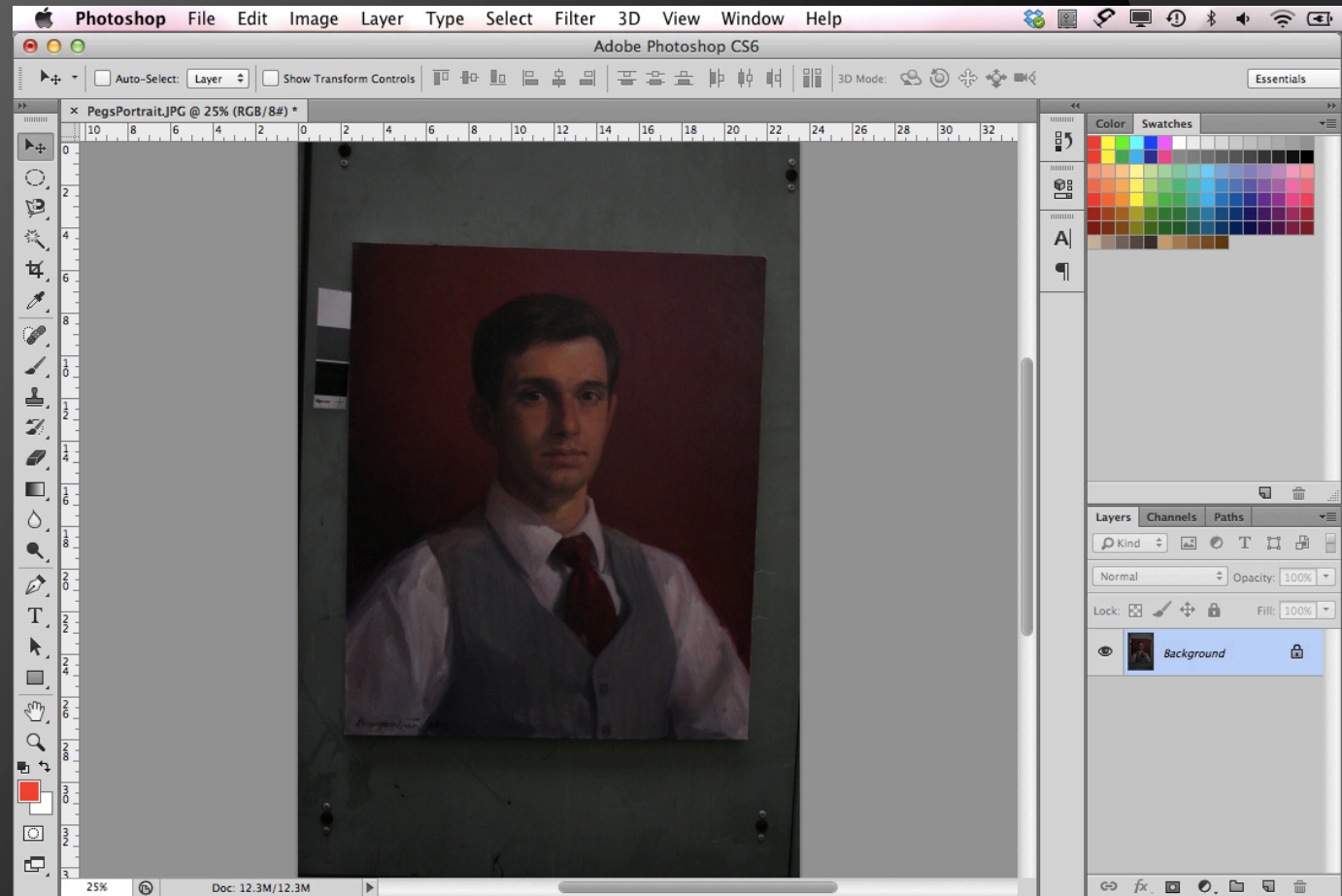
"Save As" the file.

- **To avoid overwriting the file accidentally, you should resave the file. This is critically IMPORTANT!**

- From the top menu bar, go to FILE and scroll down to SAVE AS.

Rename the file.

- Now you will rename your file. Designate the file as your working file by giving it a name instead of the numbers that the camera always gives the image.

- Make sure you choose a folder for your file so that you will know where to look for it in the future.

- Make sure the format is set to JPEG.
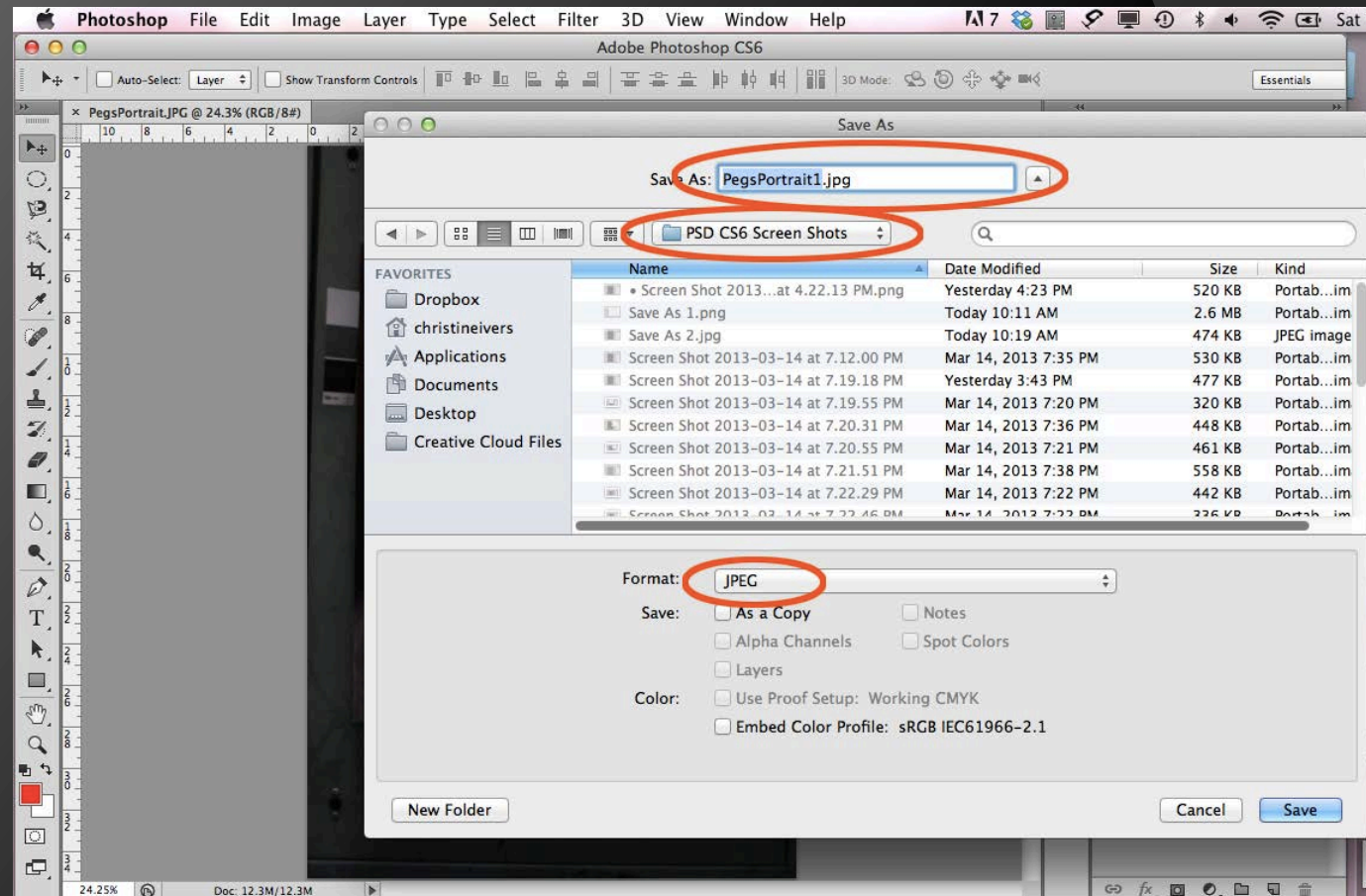
Setting the Option.

- If the Quality scroll bar is not set to 12, scroll to 12 or type it in.

- Make sure the Format Options is set to Baseline ("Standard").
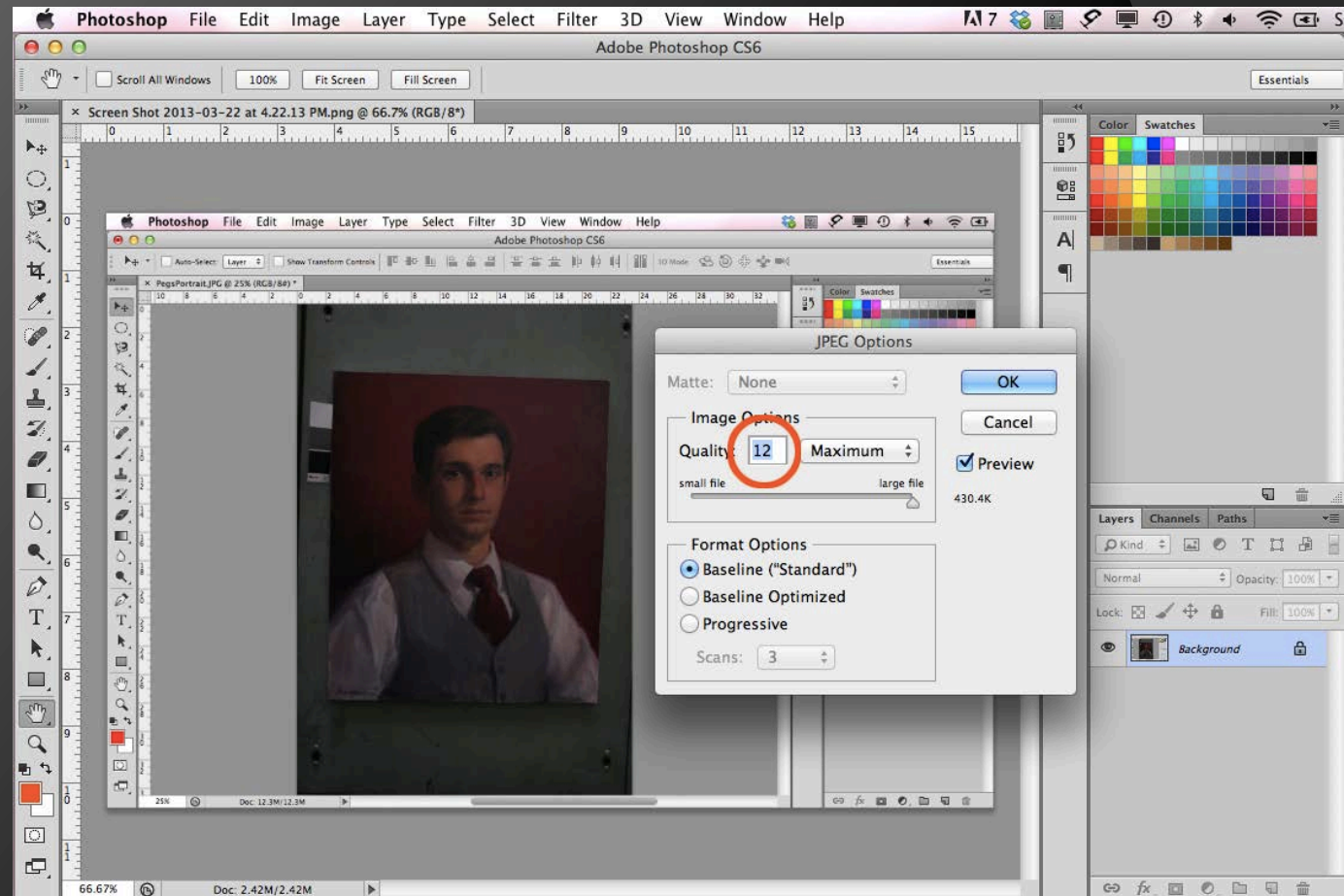
White Balance Options.

- You will notice a photographer's "white card" taped to the back of the painting.

- If you don't have one of these, you can achieve the same results by taping a piece of white paper or a white index card to the painting when you shoot it.
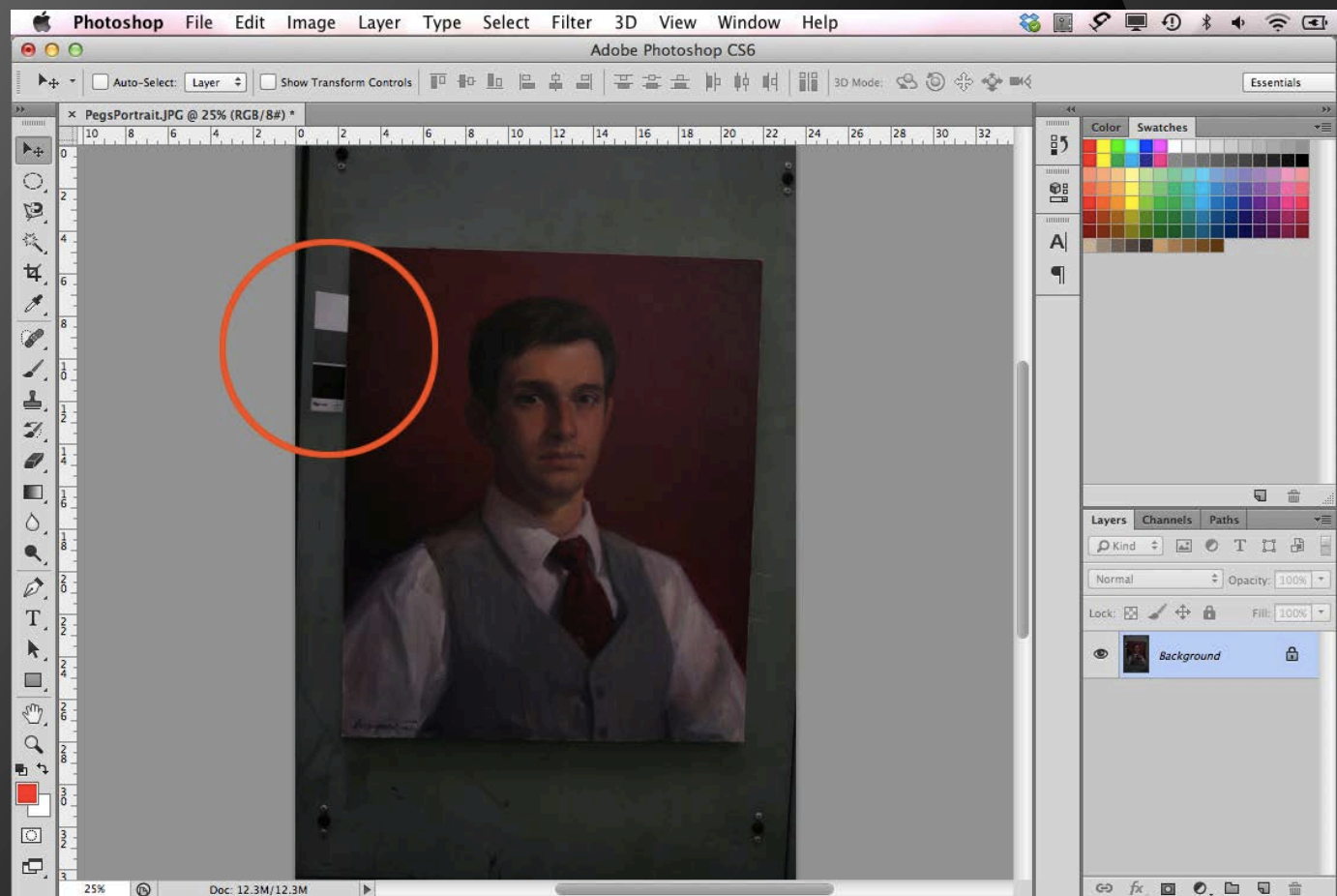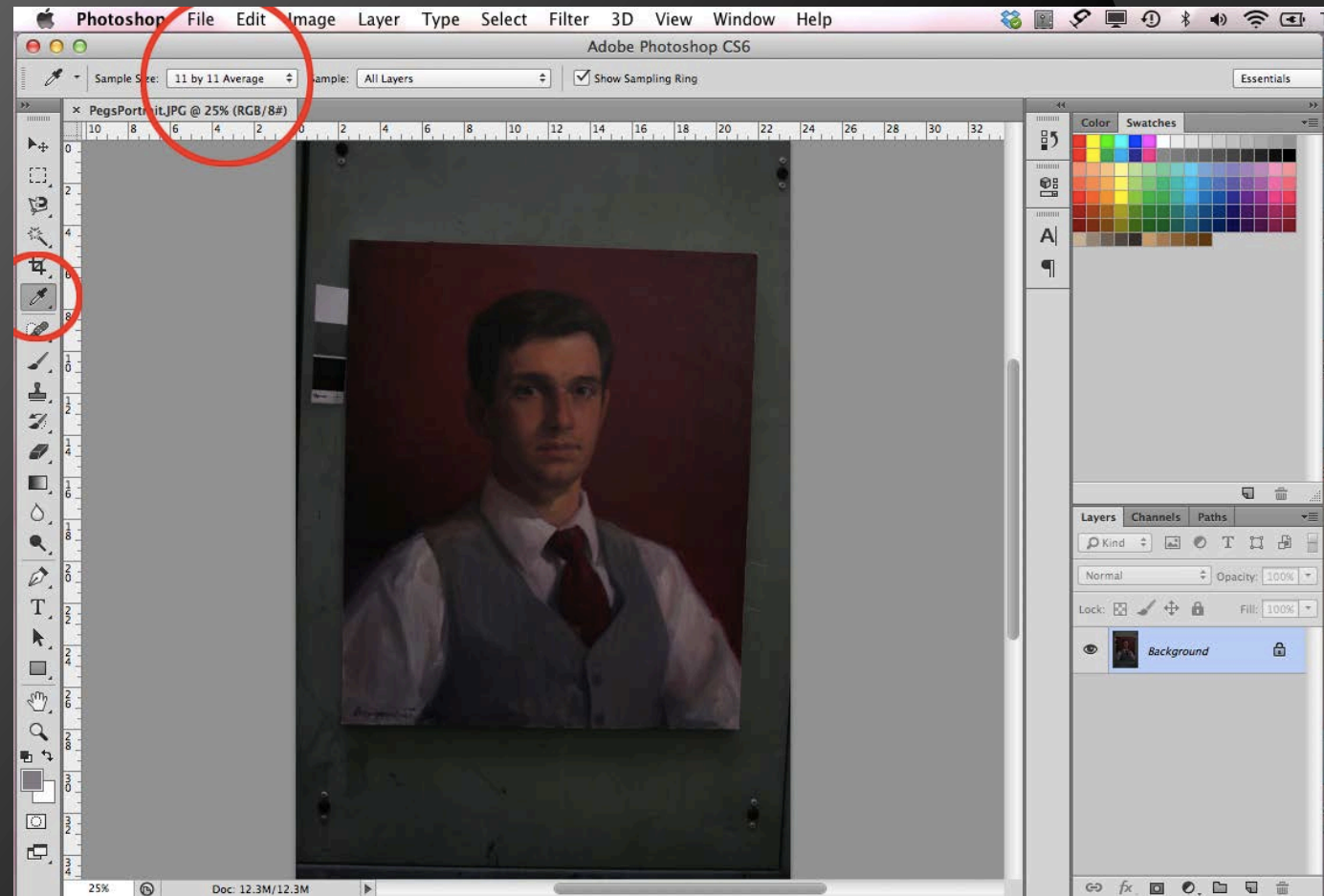
Open the program and file.

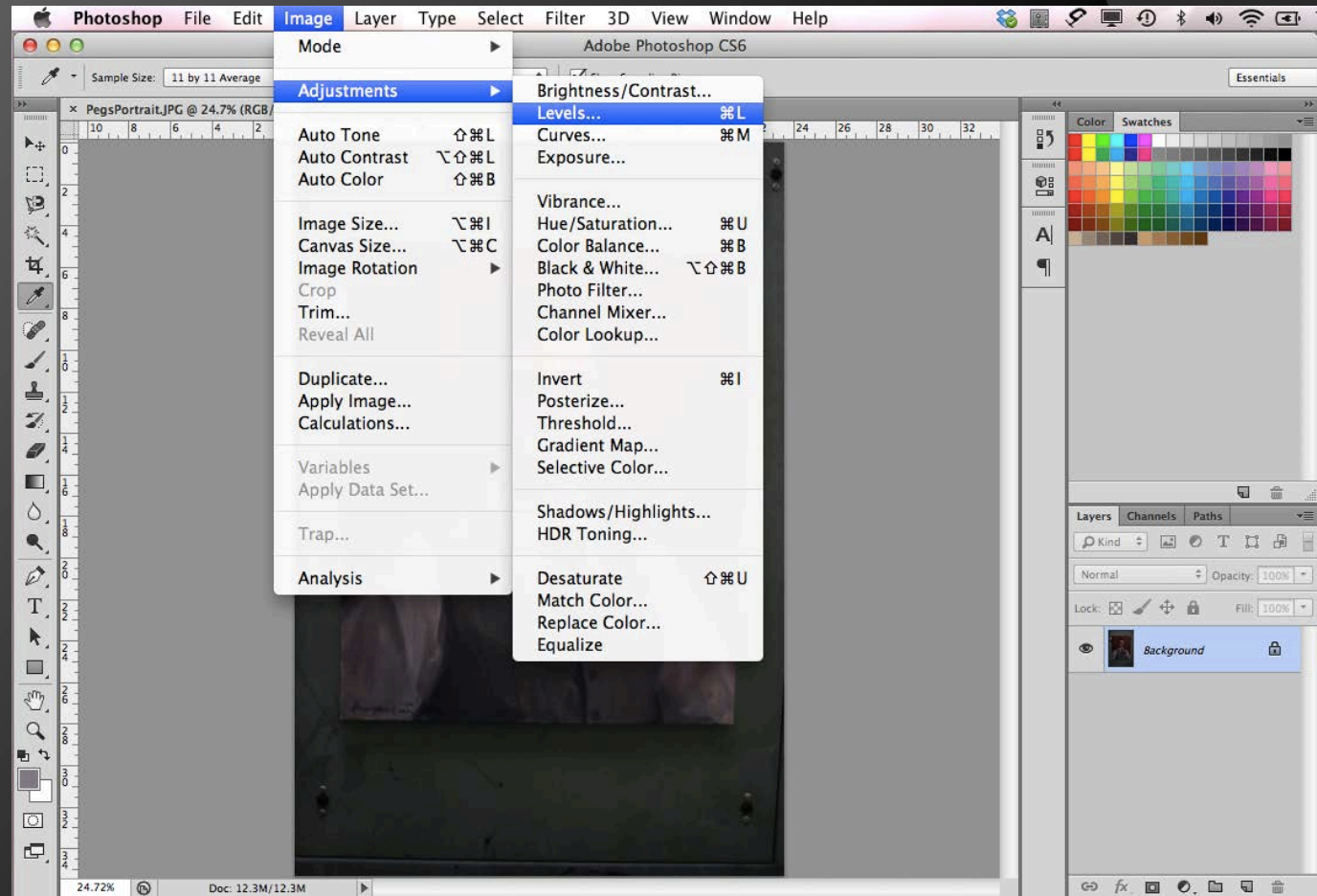- Make sure that the scroll bar in the upper right hand corner is set to Essentials.
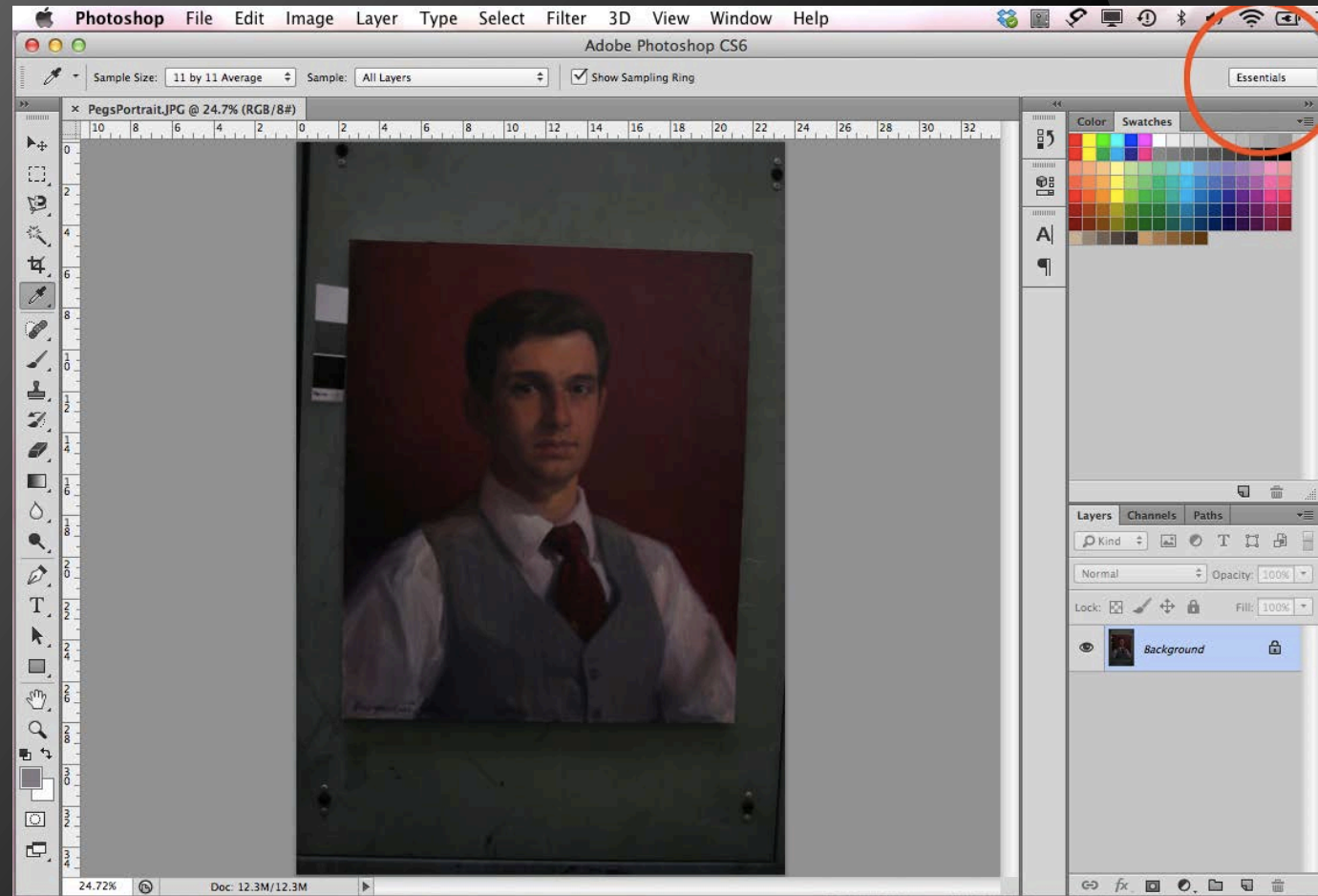
Set up the Sample.

- Click on the dropper icon and set the sample scroll bar to **11 by 11 Average**.

Find the Levels.

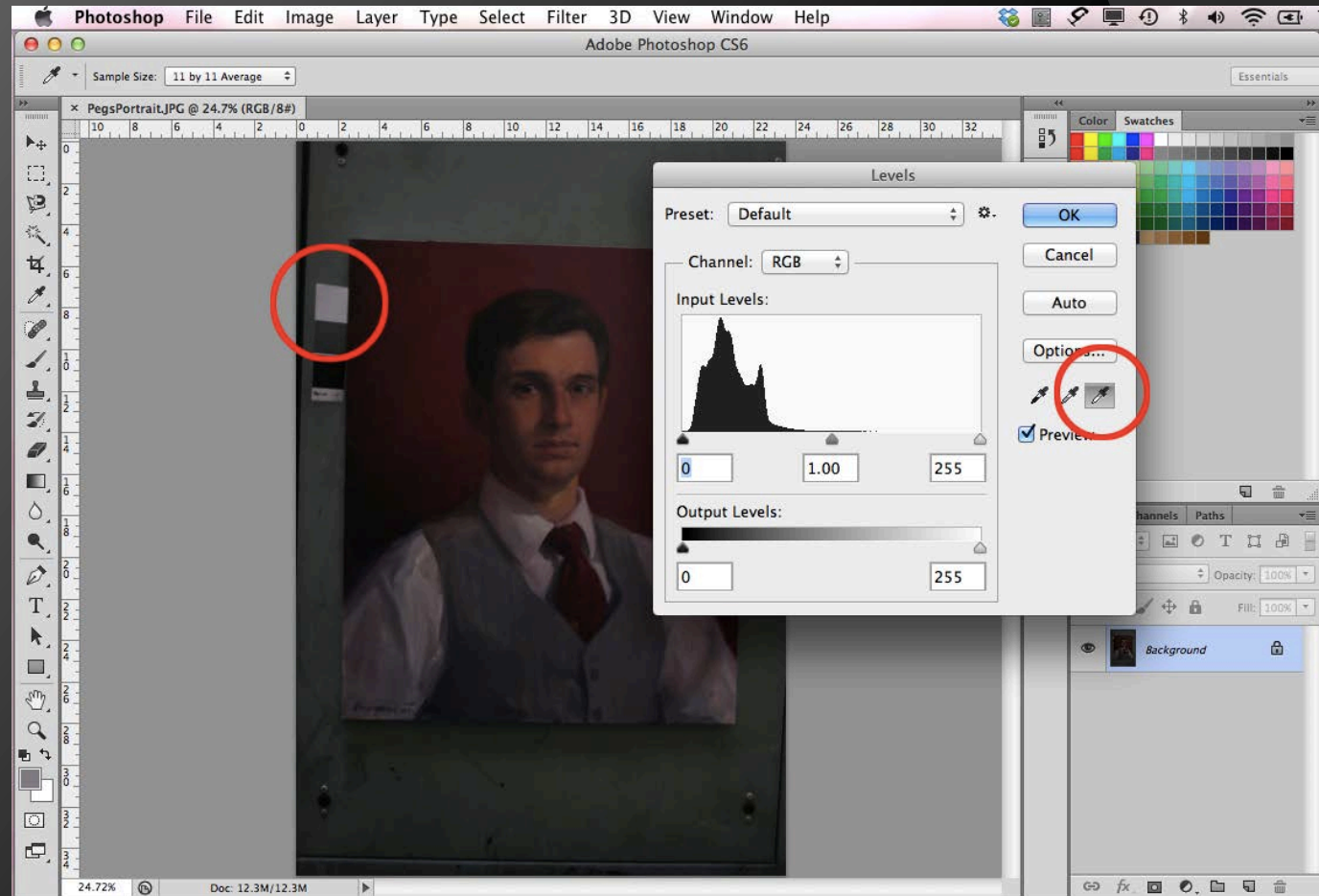- From the top menu, click on **IMAGE > ADJUSTMENTS > LEVELS…**

Find the WHITE eyedropper.

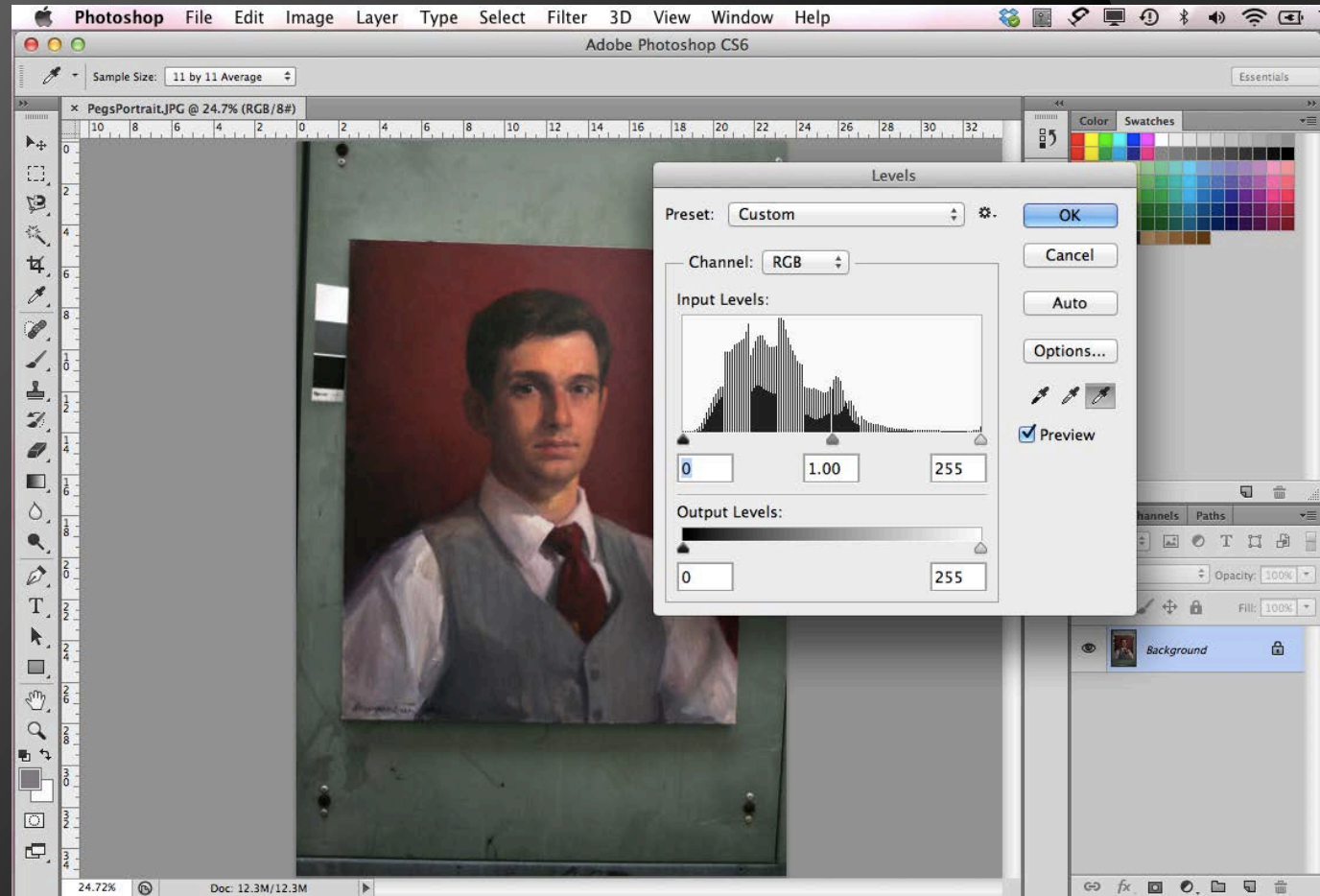When the dialogue box comes up, highlight the grey eyedropper FIRST and click on the grey part of the card.
Then click the white eyedropper and click on the white part of the card.

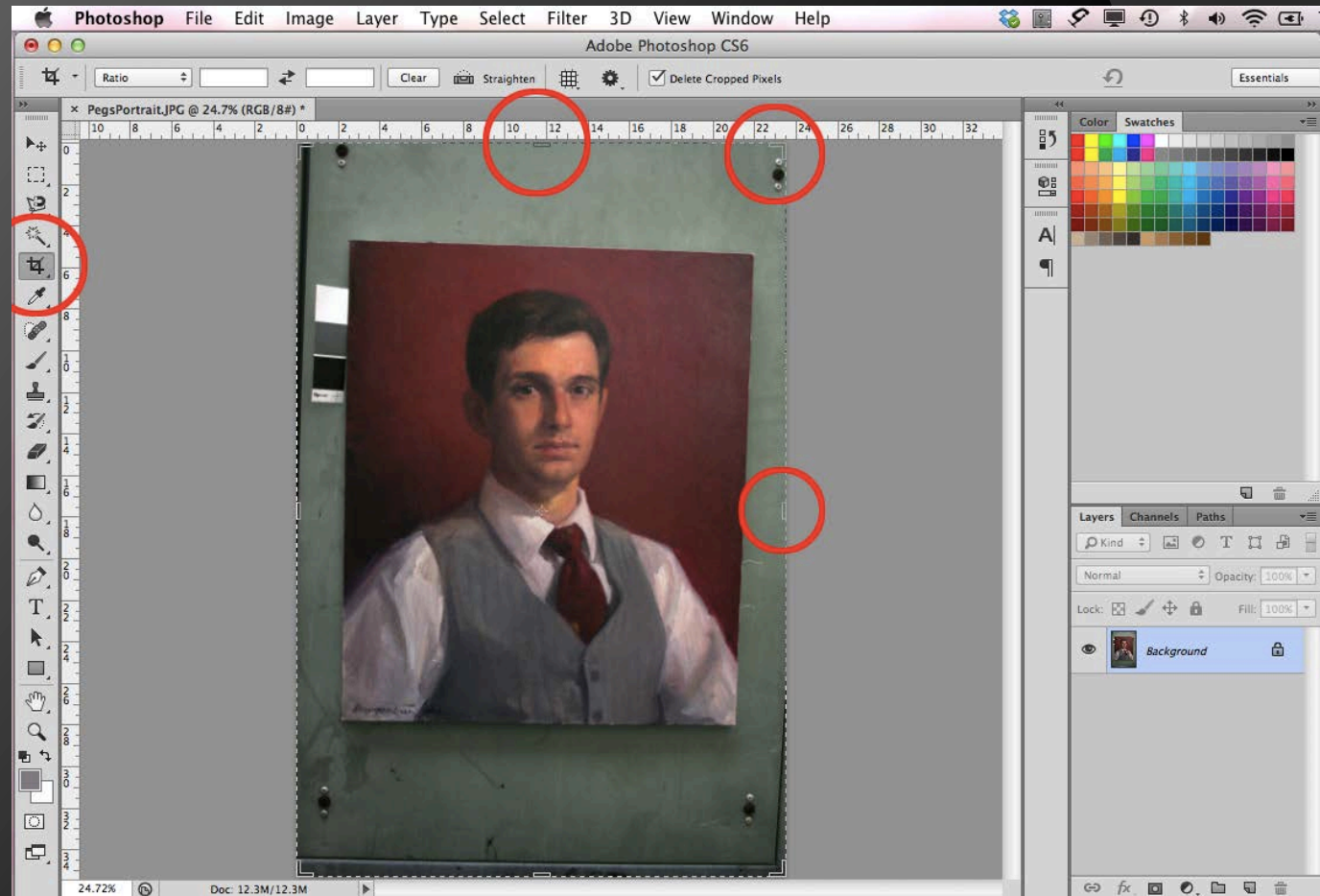This will set the "white balance" of your photo.

See the difference!

○ These two steps should bring your shot into near perfect color balance.

Crop the photo.

- Click on the crop tool in the left hand tool bar.

- You will see dotted lines appear around your image with "handles" on the corners and sides.
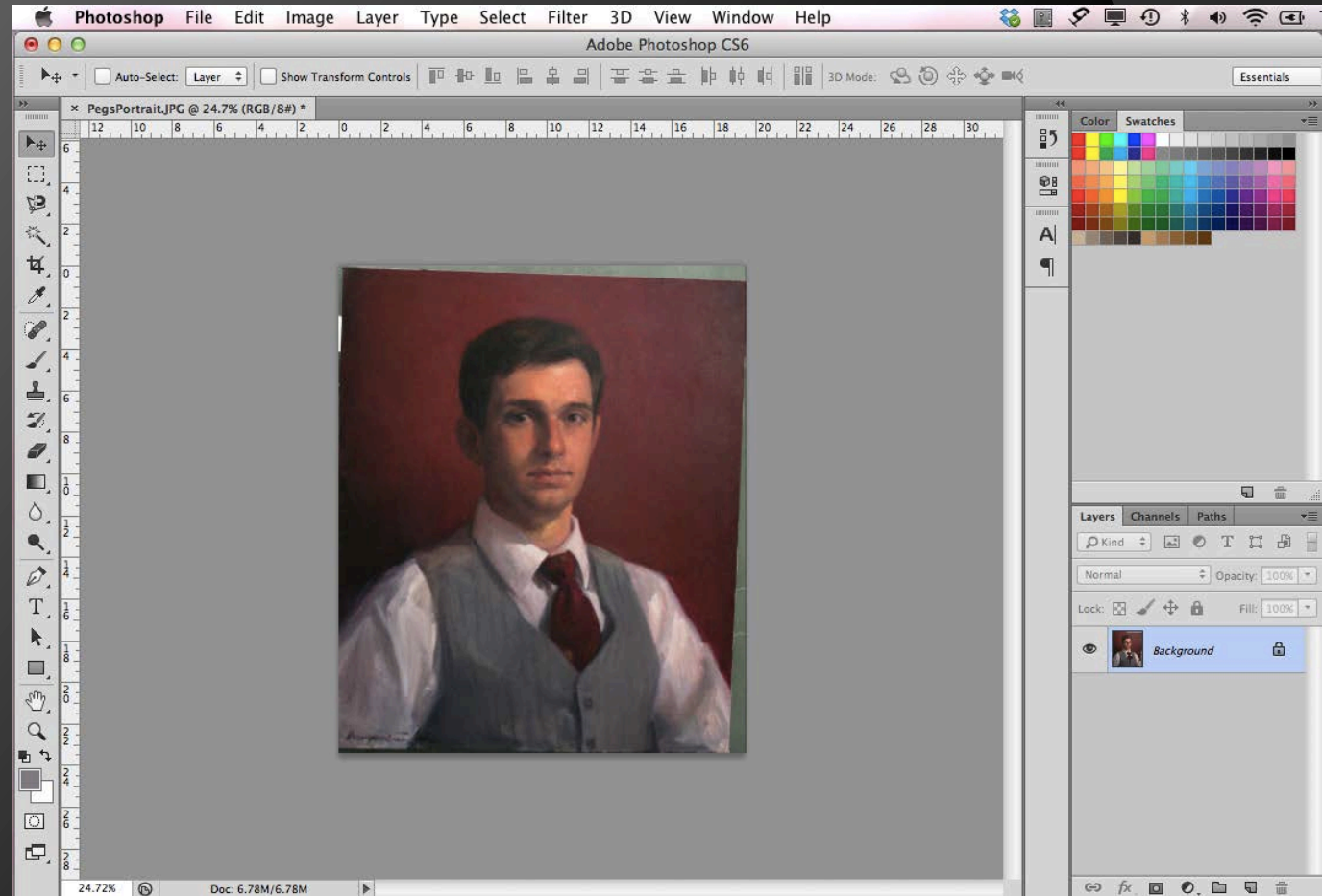
Drag the "Handles."

- Click on one of the handles on the sides, top or bottom.

- Slowly drag the "handles" to the outer corners of the image. Don't worry that the image is crooked at this stage.
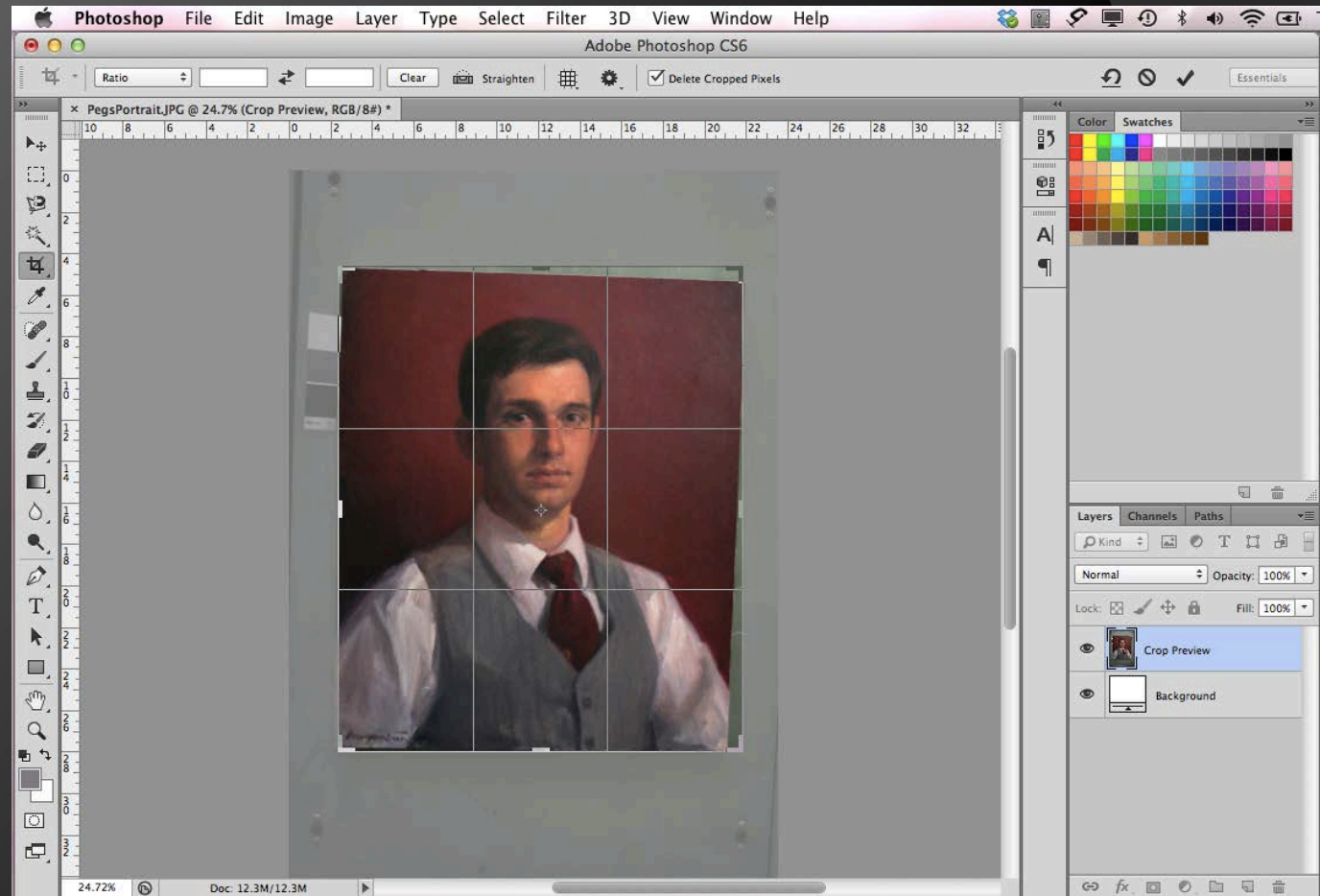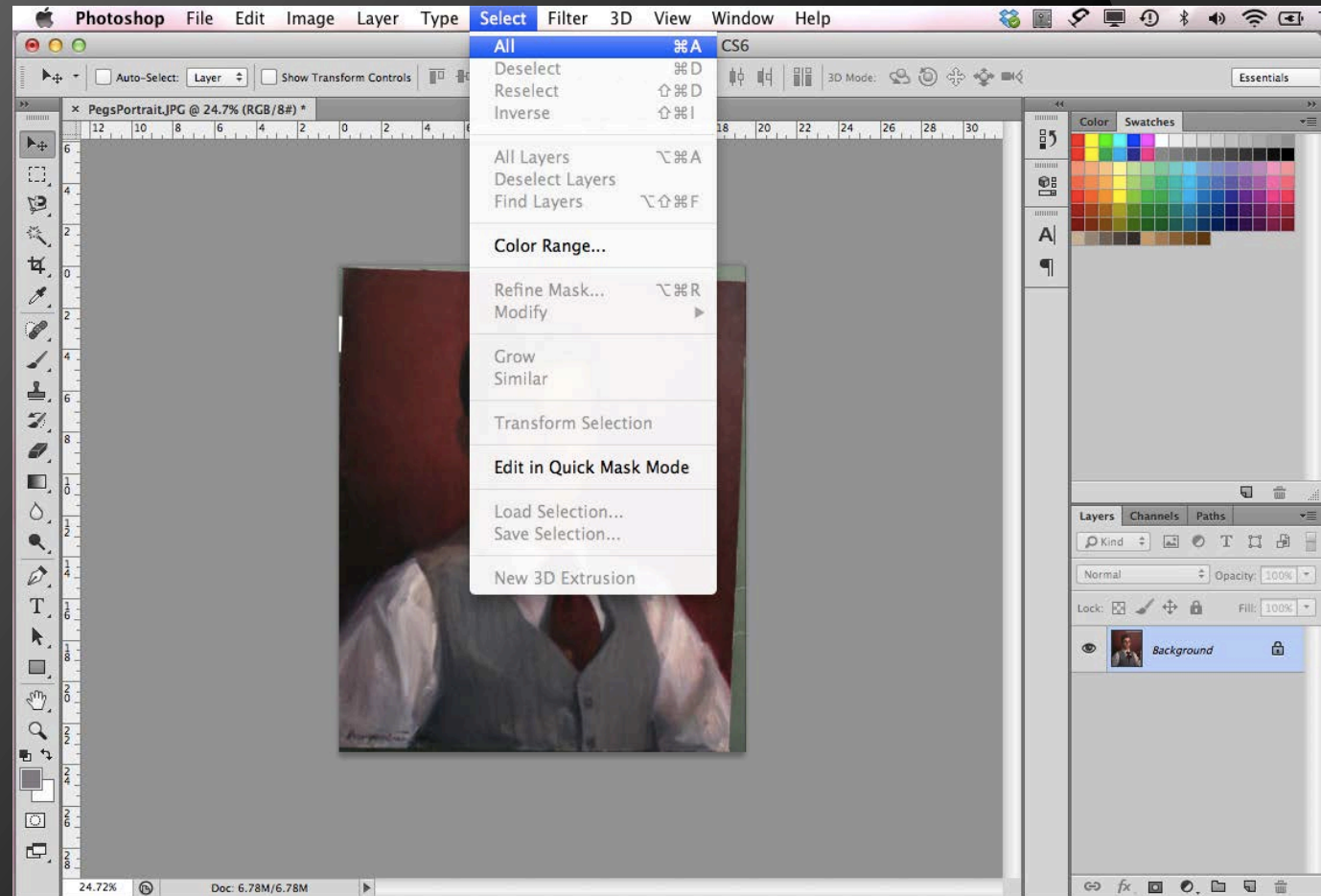
Notice what's left.

- If you didn't shoot the picture totally straight on at a 90 degree angle, you will most likely wind up with an image like this.
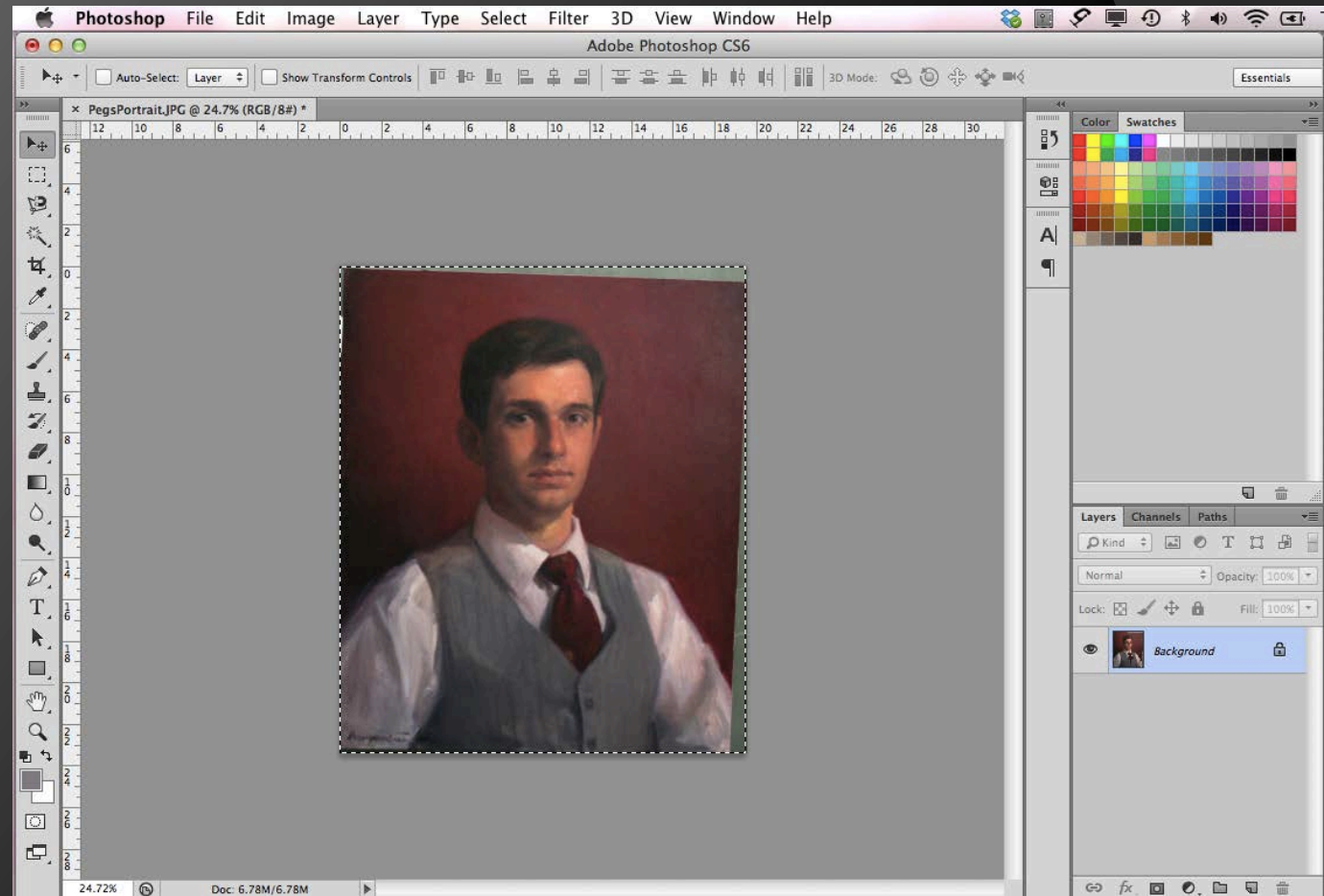
- DON'T WORRY!

Select the entire image.

- From the top menu, go to SELECT > ALL

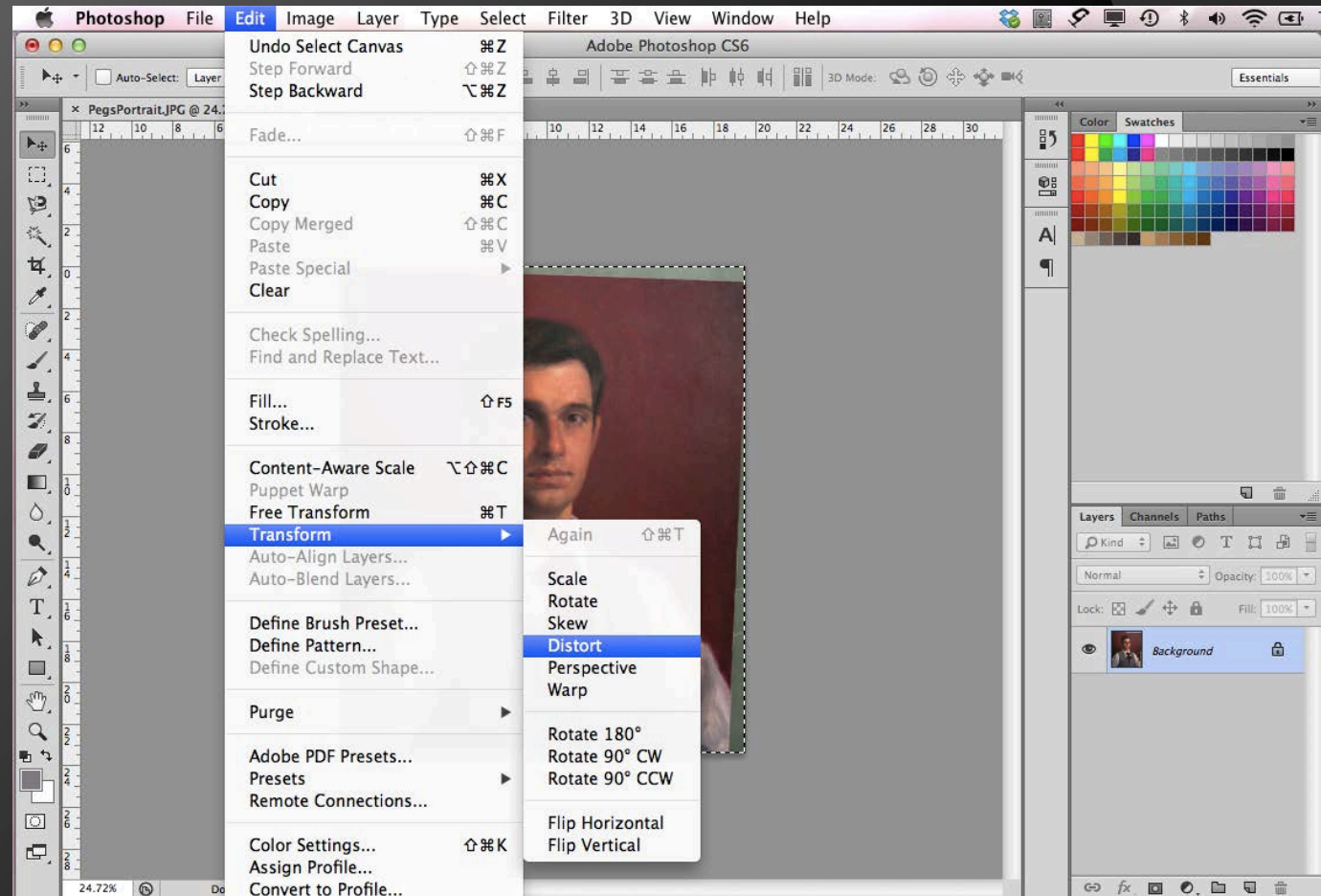- There will again be a "marquee" (that's the little snake like dotted lines) crawling around the photo.

Select the entire image.

- It should look like this.

Transform the image.

- From the top menu, click on **EDIT > TRANSFORM > DISTORT**

"Distort" the image.

- Put your cursor over one of the four corners, click and hold.

- Now hold down your Shift key and drag the corner until you get rid of the background. This straightens out the photo. The Shift or Alt keys constrain the movement of the corner to only vertical or horizontal movements.
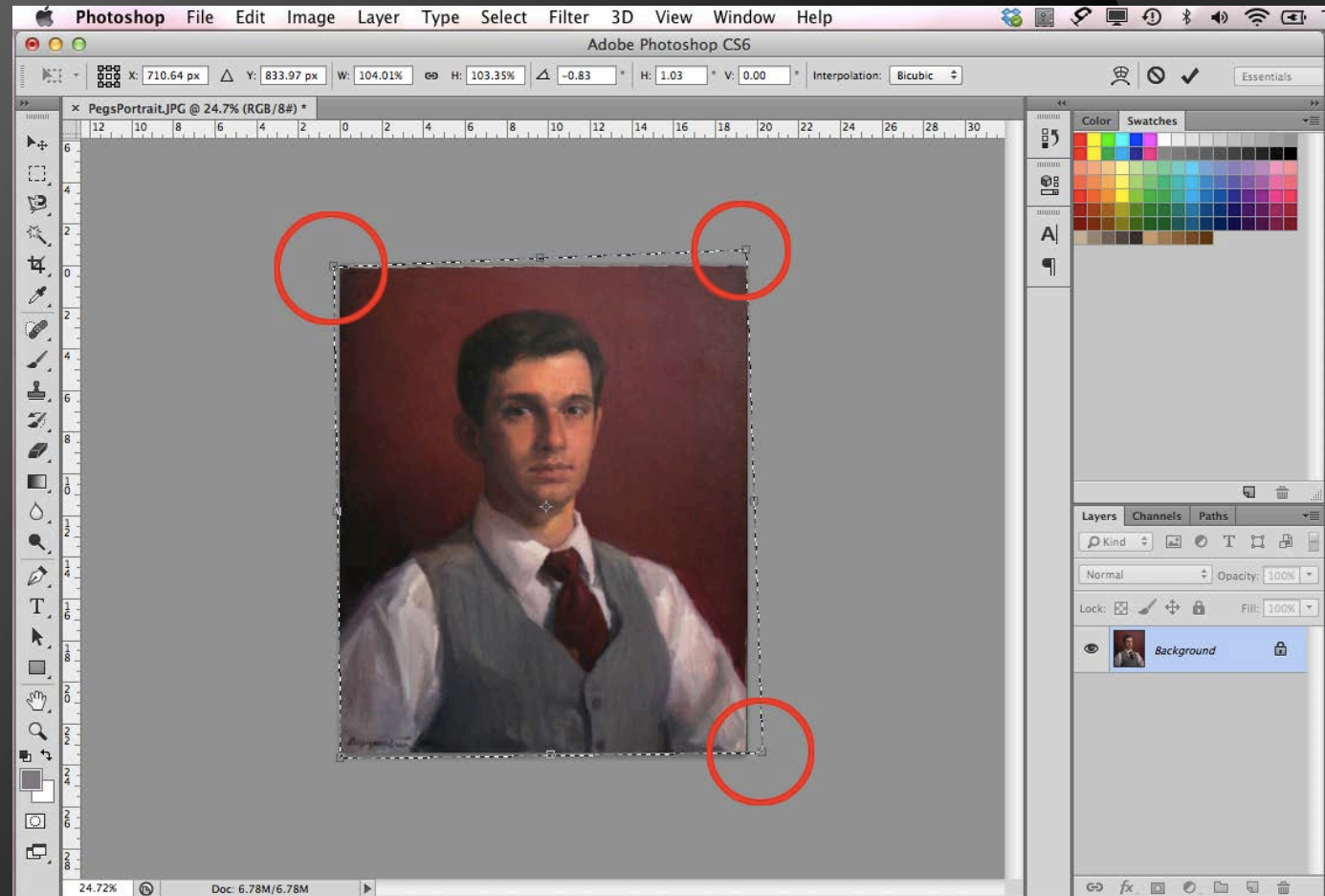
Save the file.

- Same as in the beginning. Just make sure the Quality is set to 12 and hit okay.
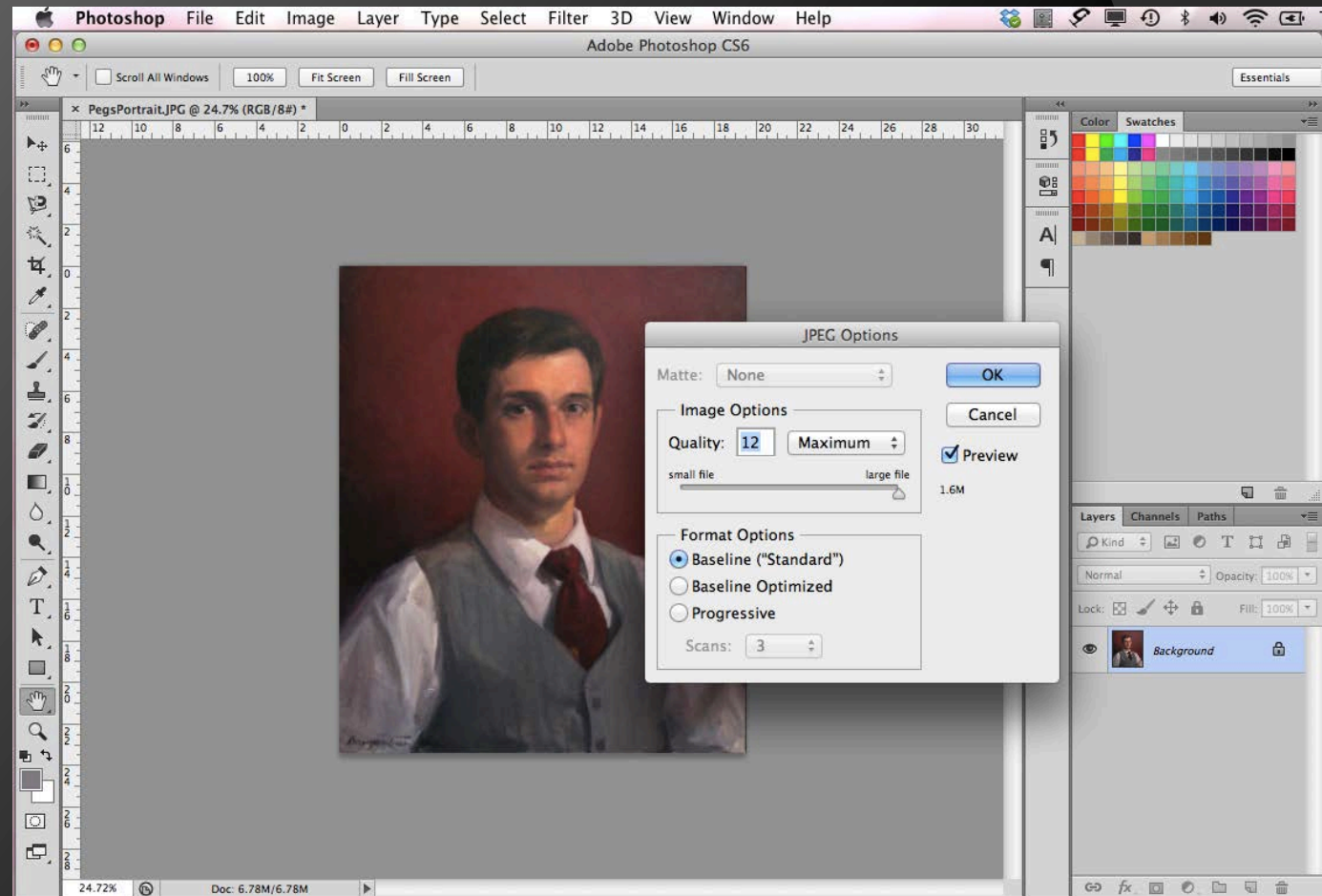
Resize your image.

- Since most cameras shoot at 72 ppi/dpi (pixels per inch or dots per inch), you will usually have to reset the image size and resolution for competitions.

- **Make SURE that you read the prospectuses VERY carefully** as different competitions require different settings.
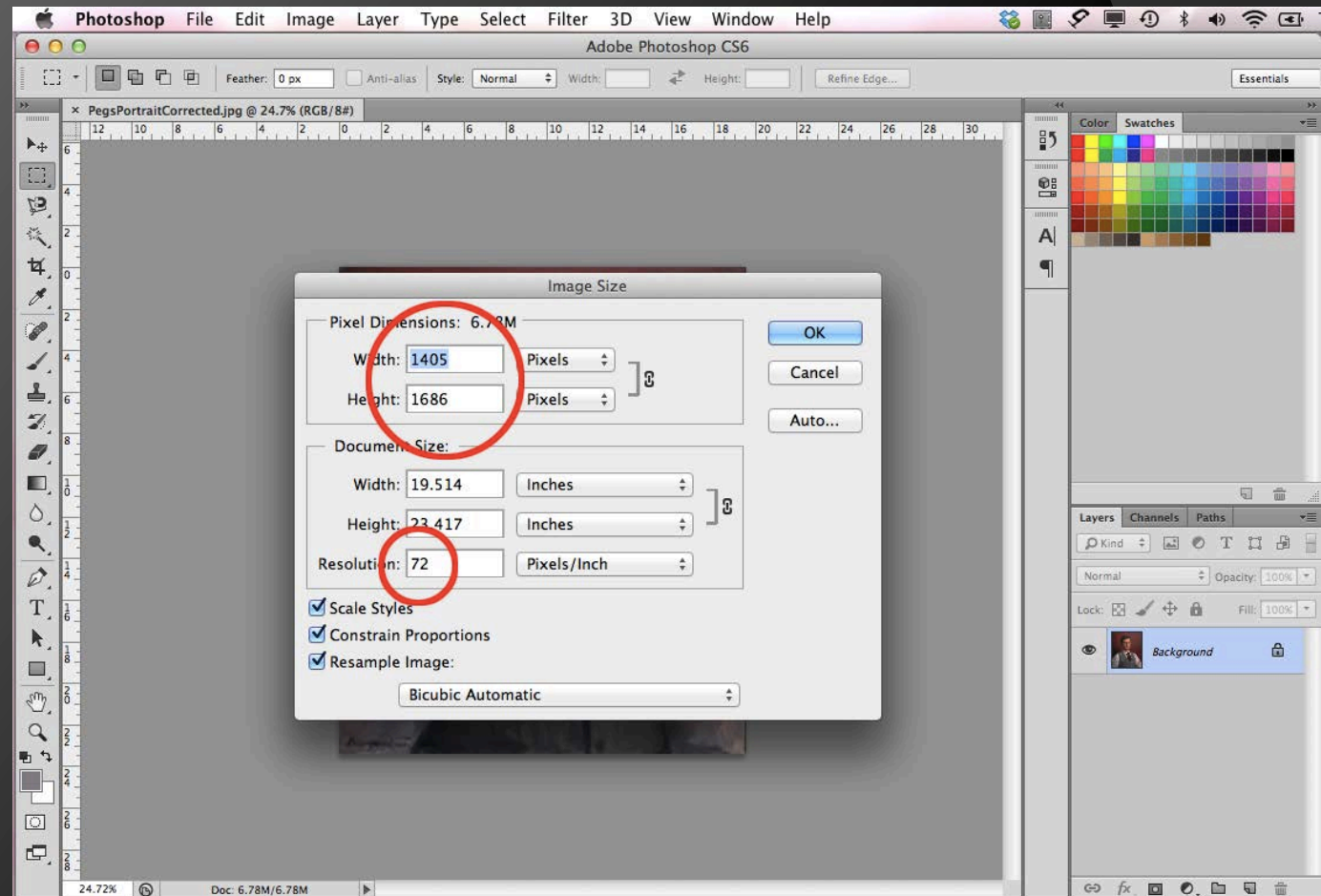
Change the settings.

- Highlight the Resolution setting and type in the required pixel height or width. (This should be explained in the prospectus.) Then highlight the Pixel Dimensions and type in the number. **MAKE SURE YOU SET THE RESOLUTION SETTING FIRST!**

- **ALWAYS check the specifications for competitions. They may vary.**
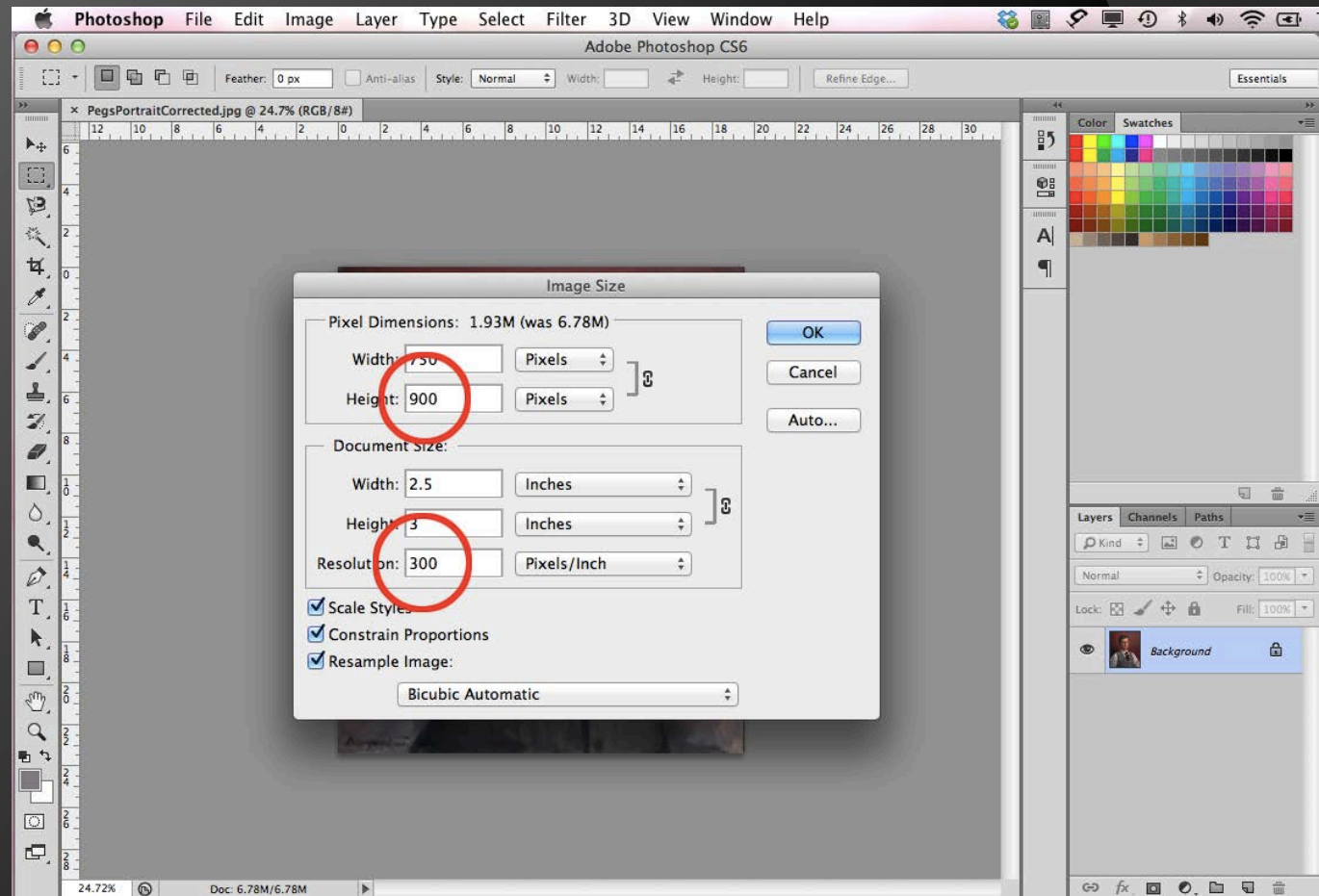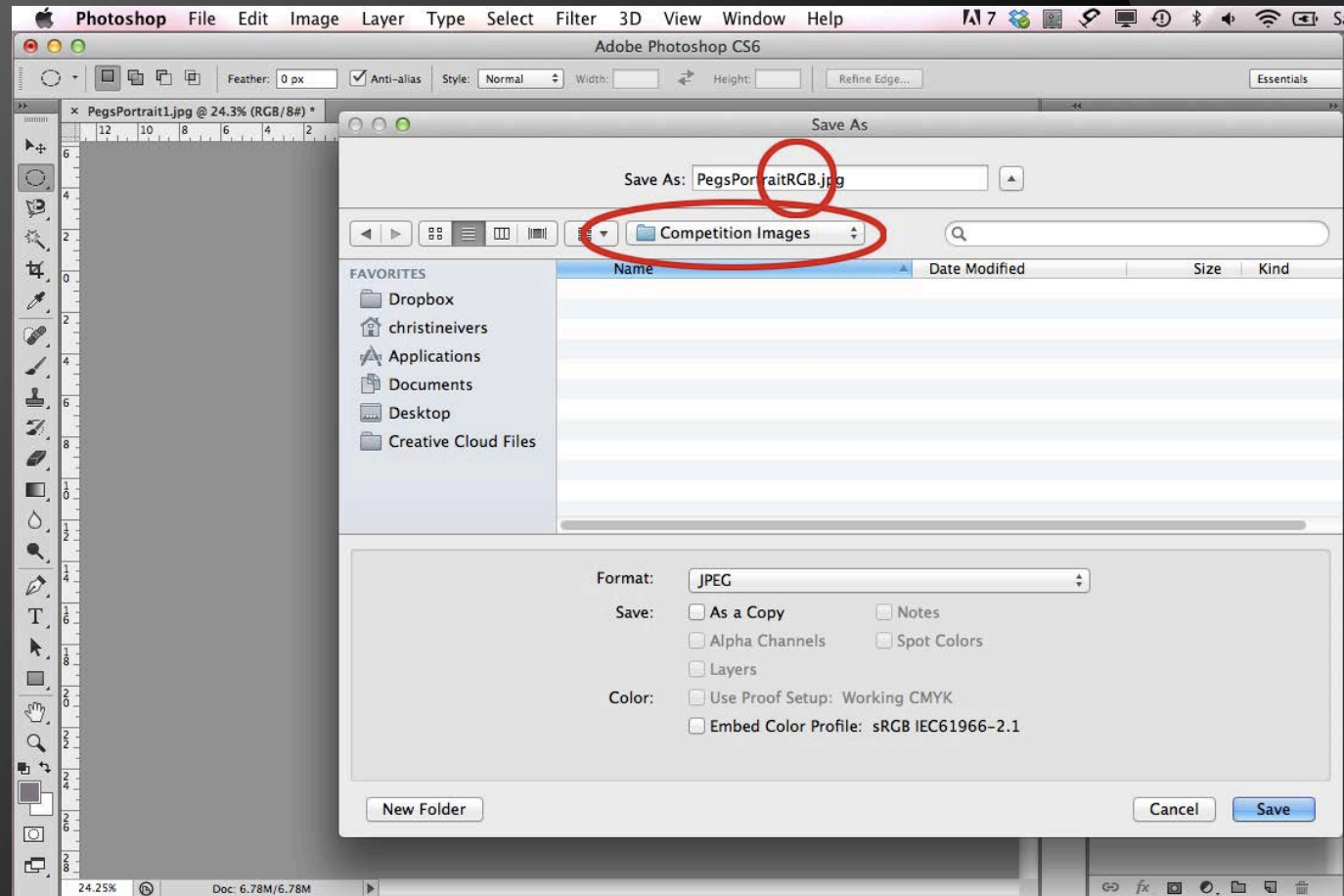
Setting your file for competition.

- For ALL competition entries **MAKE SURE YOU LEAVE THE COLOR SETTING IN RGB** (Red, Green, Blue)

- Always double check this from the top menu by going **to IMAGE > MODE > RGB COLOR.**

NOTE: Any images that will be shown with light passing through them (web, email, slides, TV, etc.) show up much better in this format!
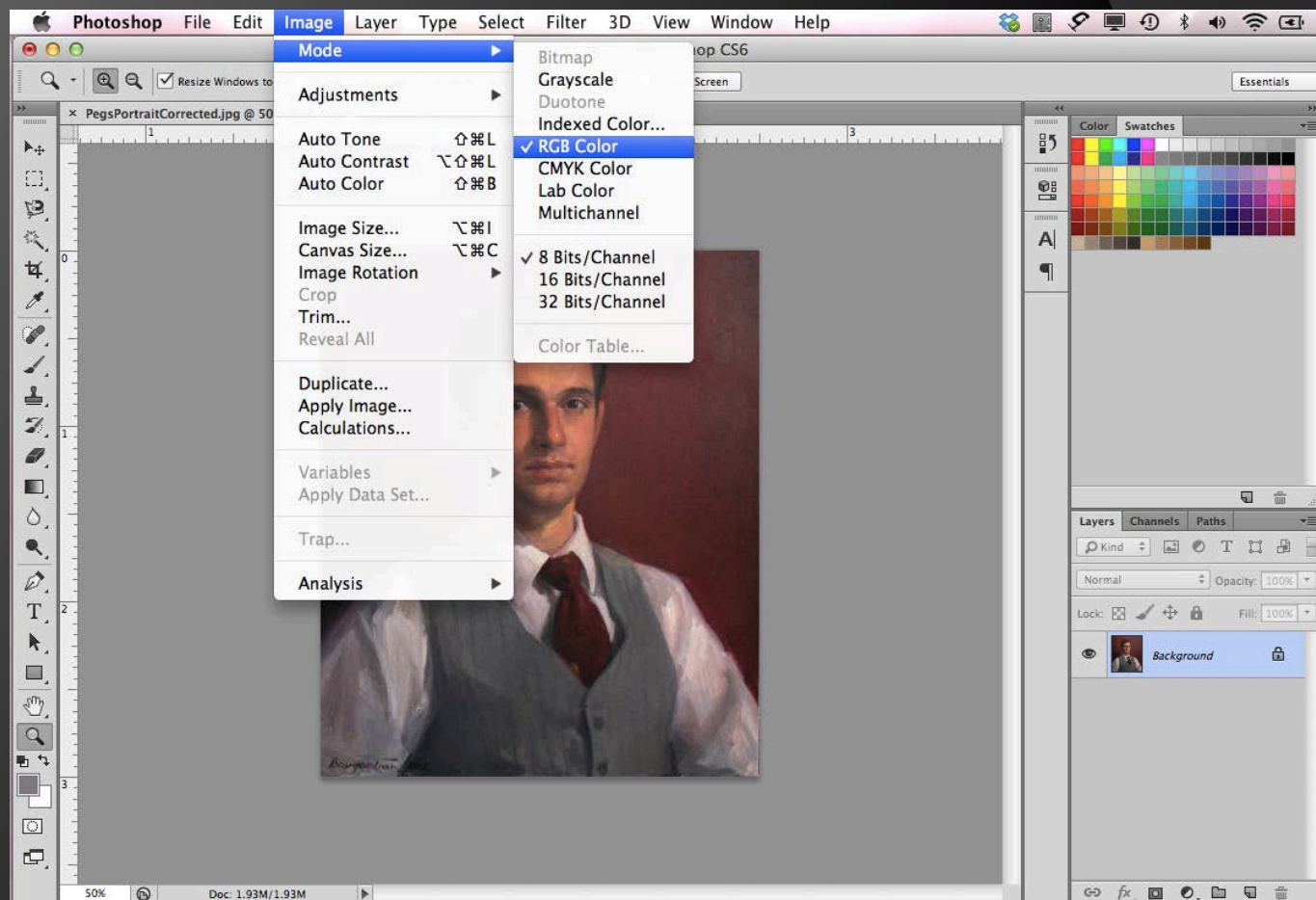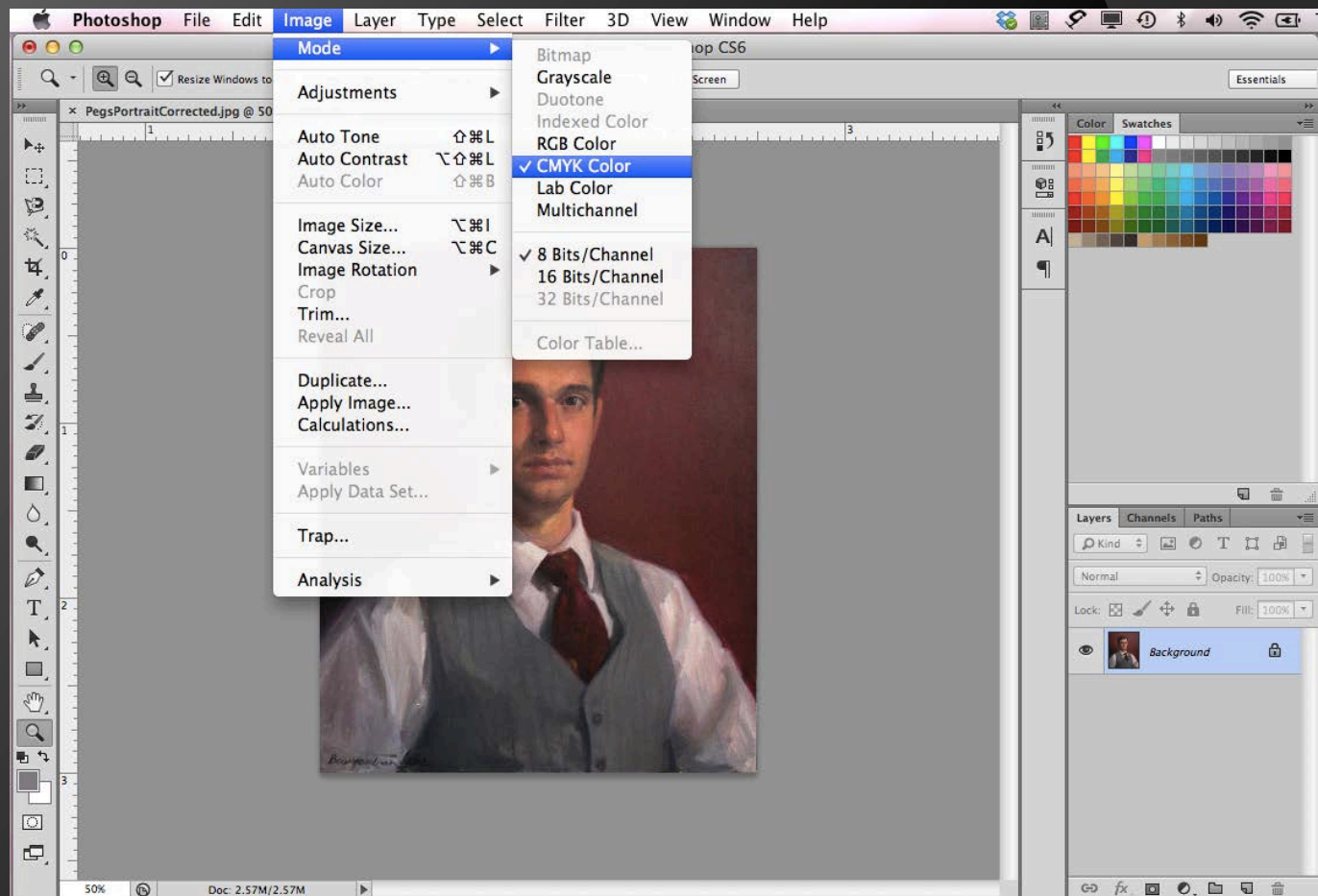
Resave the file for competition.

- Make sure to **SAVE AS** the file! Never overwrite your originals!

- **ALWAYS** include the color profile format (**RGB**) in the file name. You will always have to rename this file for different competitions.

Setting your file for print.

- If you plan to print your work (post card, posters, cards, note cards, gicleés, etc.), **you MUST convert the file to CMYK!** (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black)

- If you do not do this, the colors will appear garish in the reproduction!
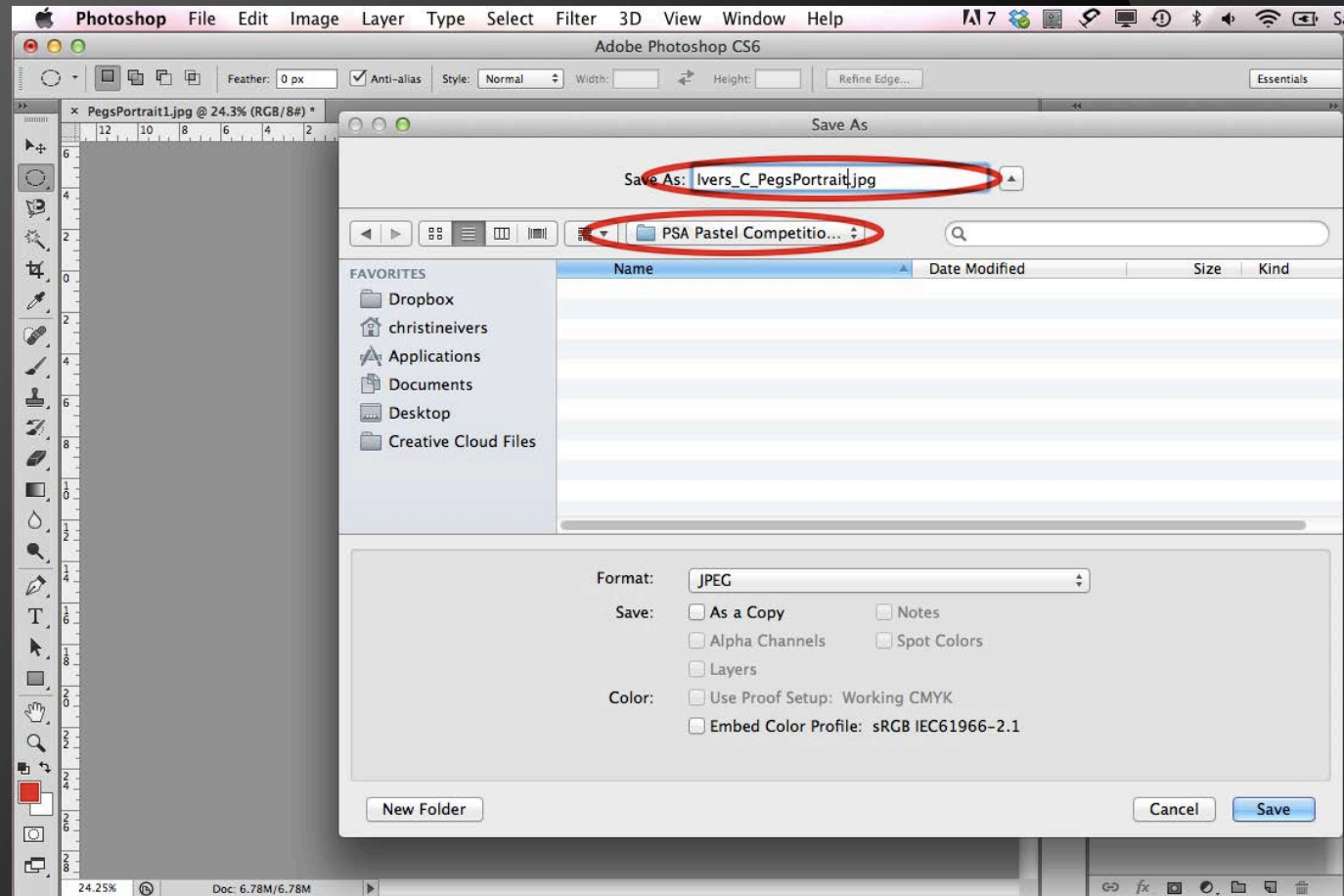
Rename the file.

- Make sure to **SAVE AS** the file! Never overwrite your originals!

- Make sure you label it as **CMYK** so that you will not accidentally send a **CMYK** file to competition! It will look horrible to the jury.
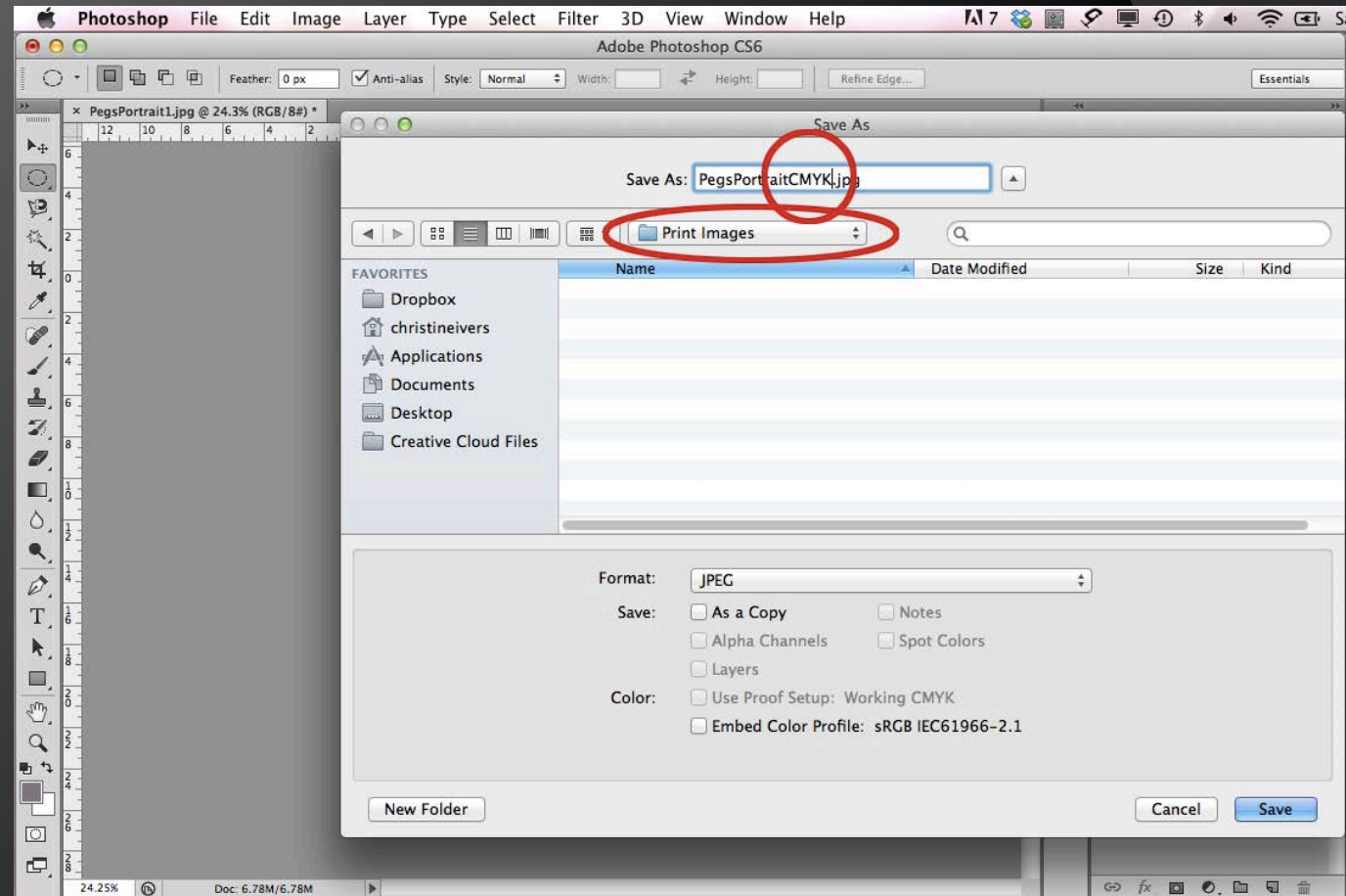
Rename the file for competition.

- Make sure to **SAVE AS** the file! Never overwrite your originals!

- Now rename the file as instructed in the prospectus.

Congratulations! You've done it!