Today's Question: I have recently purchased Photoshop on the cloud but have no idea exactly what that means or how it works. I know I get updates/downloads automatically but where exactly is all that info and where is it stored?

Tim's Answer: I think it is perfectly understandable to be confused by the term "cloud" when it comes to software, because this term has been used beyond what I would consider the "real" meaning of the term.

The term "cloud" in this context refers to servers on the Internet, generally in *related to running software via the Internet rather than on your local computer.* For example, if you are accessing email through a website, such as might be the case when you're using a web browser to access Gmail, Yahoo Mail, or any other online email provider, you're using the cloud.

By contrast, if you're running a local application on your computer to read your email, it would be fair to say you're using "the cloud" to download your email, but you are actually working locally.

You may think that you are running Photoshop through a web server on the cloud. In fact, the Adobe Creative Cloud subscription simply involves downloading software from the Adobe servers, but you are running that software locally on your computer. *In other words, this is nothing more than downloading software from a website and running that software locally.*

That said, one of the advantages of using software such as that offered through an Adobe Creative Cloud subscription is the ability to receive frequent uploads to that software. So, while a "normal" installation of Photoshop might be something of a fixed installation without any frequent updates, with the Adobe Creative Cloud you'll find that updates are issued somewhat frequently and can be accessed online very easily.

I think the best way to think about all this is that in many cases what is referred to as "cloud" computing is really just software you download from a website and that might have an online component for updates and other features.