

Developing the Shot

Using PNGs, the Identity Plate, and the Print module in Lightroom Classic to add graphical borders to your images

Proving Ground

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Photoshop® USER

Cover Image by Dennis Fleischman | *KelbyOne Member*

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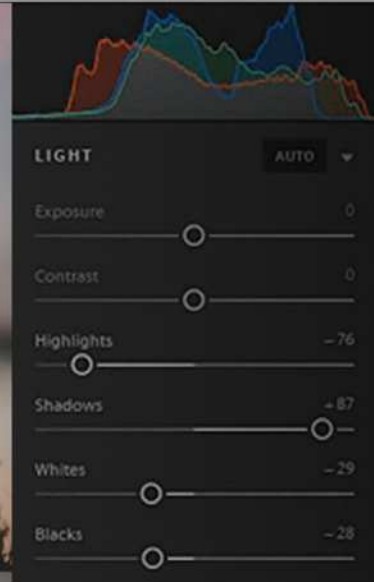
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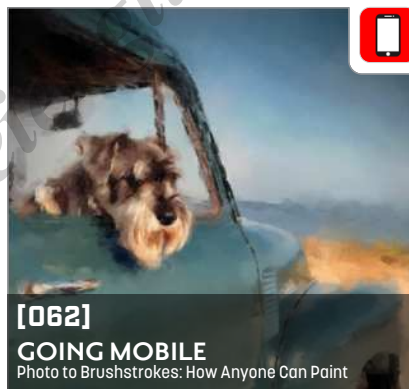
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ONLINE CONTENT

Whenever you see this symbol at the end of an article, it means there are either downloadable practice files or additional content for KelbyOne members at <http://kelbyone.com/magazine>.

Click this symbol in the navigation bar at the top of the online reader to access the Contents.

Whenever you see this button in an article, click it to go to the KelbyOne site to watch courses that cover similar topics contained in the article.

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PHOTOSHOP WORLD!

Outside of a major Photoshop or Lightroom update, this is about the biggest news that we get to share around here, and that's the official announcement that we're hosting a three-day, all online version of our annual Photoshop World Conference, and we're incredibly excited!

Our goal is to make this online version of Photoshop World as close as we can to the in-person event, complete with an opening keynote, Mid-night Madness, the big first-night party, and the Guru Awards, not to mention the multiple training tracks from your favorite Photoshop World instructors!

The dates are August 31–Sept 2, 2021, and you can be a part of this very special event no matter where you are in the world: it's open to everybody, everywhere, and you're all invited! I know for many who have attended the in-person conferences for so many years, this conference means a lot to us on so many levels. Not only for the education, which is the heart of the conference, but also for many personal reasons. I know for me, it's a chance to reconnect with friends that I might only get to see at the conference. That connection is really important, and that's why we've always put an emphasis on having fun and why we've always built in so many opportunities for us to get together during the conference.

One thing that might surprise you (well it did me, anyway) is that people who have attended our other online conferences have told us that we've been able to maintain that connection—that community feeling that we're all in this together—and they've made many friendships and working connections through these online conferences. I'm absolutely tickled to see this happen. If you haven't yet been to one of our online events, it might sound a bit hard to believe, but ask anyone who has attended one and they'll tell you how our community comes together, right there online.

Over the years, we've heard from so many people who wished they could attend a Photoshop World



Conference, but the travel, the costs of travel, or time away from work kept that dream out of reach, so we're particularly glad for those folks that this is their chance (maybe their first chance ever) to be a part of something really special. As one of our members, of course, this is your event that's created for KelbyOne members by KelbyOne, but we hope you'll invite your photography-loving, Photoshop-freak, and Lightroom-lunatic friends to come join us, too. You'll learn more in three days than you have in three years (plus, you get full access to *all* the classes in all the tracks for a full year after the conference, so you can rewatch any course, or catch ones you might have missed).

You can register over at photoshopworld.com. I'm so looking forward to seeing everyone online. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy this issue of *Photoshop User* that's packed with great stuff cover to cover. Here's wishing you good health and happiness, and to making some awesome images! 😊

All my best,

Scott Kelby
KelbyOne President & CEO
Editor & Publisher

THE MAGAZINE FOR LIGHTROOM & PHOTOSHOP USERS

Photoshop USER

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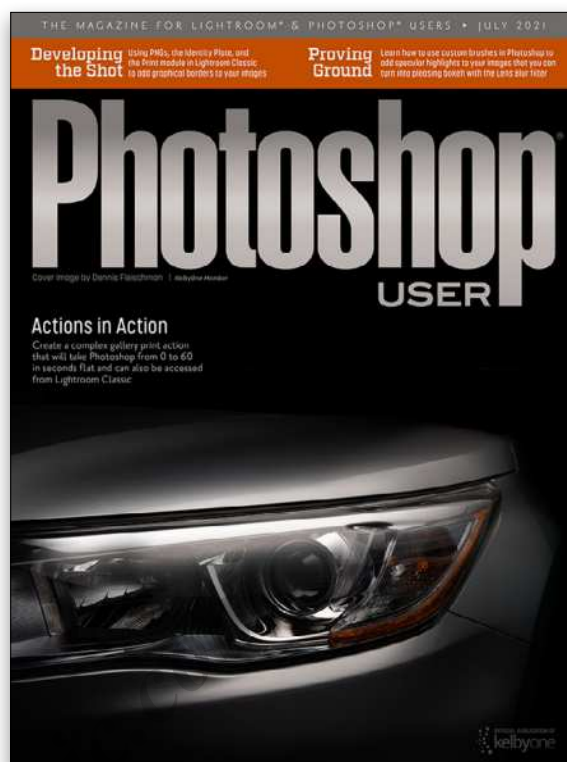
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Cover Image: Dennis Fleischman

Each issue we feature cover art by a **KelbyOne Member**

This issue's cover is by **Dennis Fleischman**, a retired software engineer and enthusiastic photographer from Washington state's Pacific Northwest. He has a passion for creating stories with his still-life images where he enjoys the creativity, freedom, and challenges that come with it. Outside of still life he photographs transportation, in particular planes, trains, and automobiles. He began his photographic journey in the early 1980s with film and darkroom printing, and hasn't looked back while embracing digital and the digital darkroom. To learn more about Dennis, turn to **page 17**.

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COVER STORY



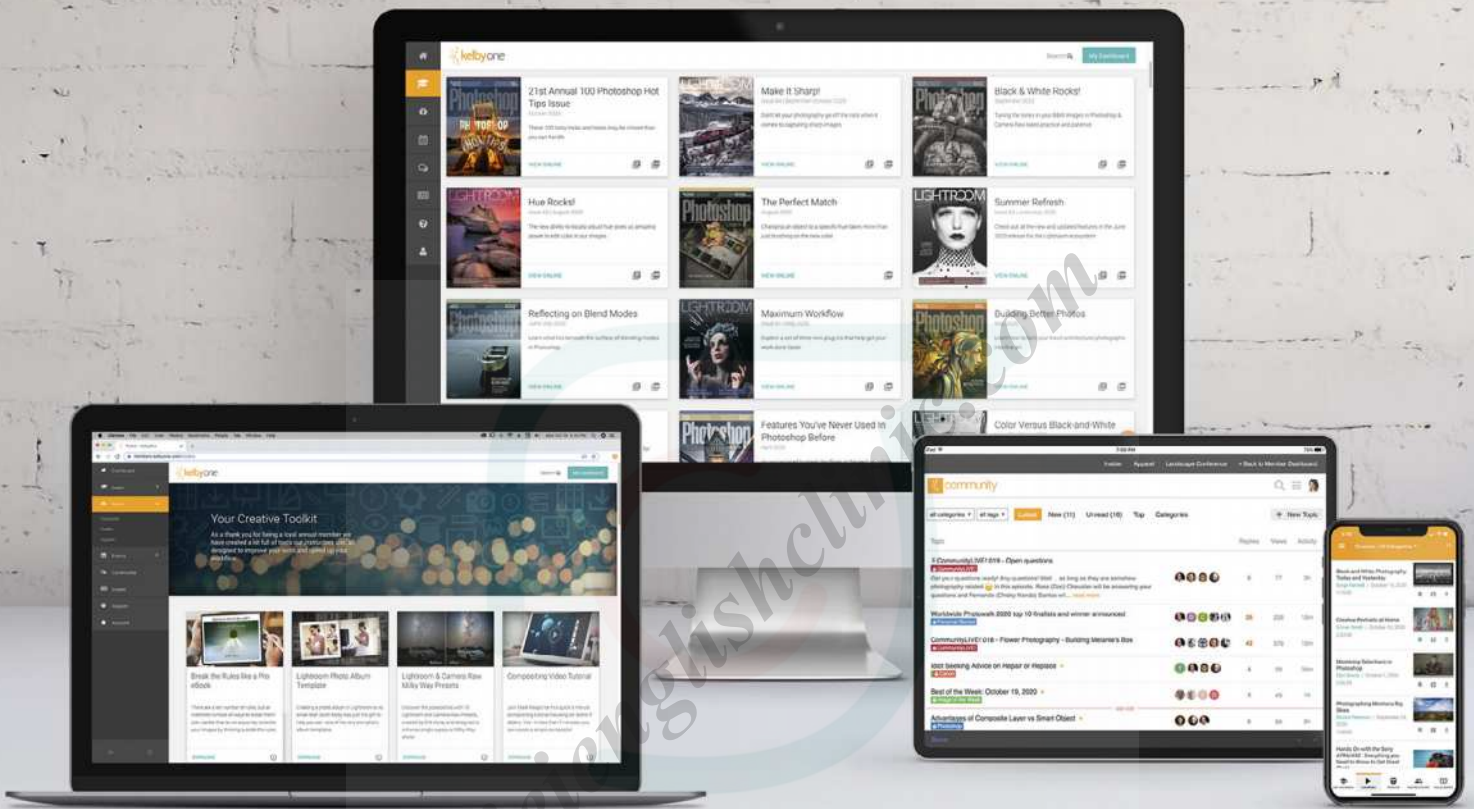
PHOTOSHOP IN ACTION WITH LIGHTROOM CLASSIC

FERNANDO SANTOS 

Based in Lisbon, Portugal, Fernando is a photographer, part-time trainer, and Adobe ACE in Lightroom. He started to photograph seriously when cameras became digital. Initially with no particular focus, Fernando became devoted to landscape and travel photography, and he's now focusing on portraits. Find him at the [KelbyOne Community](#) where he's a Leader and Moderator.



ARE YOU GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR KELBYONE PRO MEMBERSHIP?



As a Pro member, you're receiving the ultimate experience with KelbyOne. This is our complete plan that includes everything to immerse yourself in learning. We want to make sure you know about all of the added benefits you're getting as a Pro member so you can take advantage of them all! Pro members have access to our entire course library (800+ courses), including a new course every week, taught by world-class instructors who you know and love. In addition, you have hundreds of quick tips and tutorials, guided learning tracks, and the opportunity to live-learn through private members-only webcasts.

You can also get Photoshop, Lightroom, and photography help from the amazing members in our **Community**. You get *Photoshop User* magazine monthly along with access to more than 150 back issues, including all the issues of *Lightroom Magazine*. Then there's the **Creative Toolkit** packed with presets, eBooks, and other fun freebies. And last, but certainly not least, there are significant **discounts** available from our partners, such as Apple, B&H Photo, and Mpix.

Do you know someone who should go Pro? **Share the benefits of a Pro Membership** with them to help accelerate their learning today! ■

 **Questions & Comments**

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Founded in 2014, Platypod built its brand around quality and utility for artists to establish expanded perspective and vision. Our products offer unlimited combinations of tools forming an ecosystem of inspiration for photographers in areas of macro, architecture, landscape, hiking and traveling situations where tripods dare not go.





Photoshop World Is Back!

During this past year, the one question we kept hearing again and again was, “When is Photoshop World coming back?” It’s finally time to put rumors to rest. Photoshop World, the event you know and love, is happening online in 2021, so mark your calendar for August 31–September 2!

With more than 20 talented instructors, 3 tracks dedicated to photography, Photoshop, and Lightroom, a virtual showroom filled with industry leaders, and bonus after-hours fun, you won’t want to miss this event. It’s all live and online so you can learn from the comfort of your home, and you don’t have to worry about taking notes, as all the sessions will be recorded for your convenience. Your ticket also includes a six-month KelbyOne Pro membership to keep the learning going. [Click here](#) and register before August 31, 2021, at 11:00 a.m. EST to get the early bird pricing of just \$279 if you’re a KelbyOne Plus or Pro member!



Get Featured on Member Monday

Every Monday, we feature the work of a KelbyOne member on our [Insider](#) blog. Can you guess what we call it? That’s right! Member Monday (but I guess we gave that away in the title above). Each post features an image by one of our members along with a little background on that image and the gear they used to capture it. We also include some additional information about the members themselves.

As excited as members are to have their work featured, we’re just as excited to be able to share their work with you. Not only is it inspirational to the KelbyOne Community, but it’s also inspirational to us. Seeing the amazing work our members are creating drives us to create even more and better content, and it’s one of our favorite ways to display the growth and quality of our members.

So why don’t you toss your hat into the ring for the chance to be featured? What do you have to lose? Just click [this link](#) to submit your information. And your submission isn’t only considered for Member Monday, it’s also considered for the Artist Spotlight section here in the magazine (see the next three pages), as well as the cover of the magazine, which includes an interview that showcases even more of the member’s work (see page **16** for this month’s interview with KelbyOne member Dennis Fleischman whose image is on the cover of this issue).

In the meantime, check out the images below from a couple of our recent Member Mondays, then [click here](#) to check out all of the Member Mondays on the Insider.



John Dukies



Dennis Lomme









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WHO'S WHO IN THE KELBYONE COMMUNITY

DENNIS FLEISCHMAN

Dennis Fleischman is a retired software engineer and enthusiastic photographer from Washington State's Pacific Northwest. He has a passion for creating stories with his still-life images. He began his photographic journey in the early 80s with film and darkroom printing, and hasn't looked back while embracing digital and the digital darkroom. One of his images is on the cover of this issue.

Congratulations on this issue's cover! Can you tell us a little about the featured image?

I have a friend who builds and collects American hot rods. He wanted some images, and I saw this photographic process called focused diffused lighting (FDL) that I thought would be fun to use to shoot his "toys." It's basically a fast shutter with highly diffused strobe lighting shot during the day. The look is very soft and creamy, and reminds me of airbrush art. The image on the cover was my attempt at the FDL process using my family car as practice. I used a strip softbox with a deflector plate and two layers of diffusion material, plus another diffusion panel. I placed this combo as close as possible to the front of the car. Due to COVID restrictions, I haven't felt comfortable shooting any of my friend's cars yet, but in my part of the world, restrictions are easing up, so it'll happen soon.

Your portfolio has a section called Planes, Trains, and Automobiles. What is it you love about shooting transport?

I've been told it's part of my German roots: cameras, airplanes, and cars! I think transport is a testimony of human achievement, and I find the characters behind its development fascinating and colorful. It really resonates with me, and the thought of it all transports me to places, times, and experiences that I'll never have in reality.

Speaking of planes, let's talk about your model airplane shots. That must be fun building, shooting, and compositing. What's your process to get a realistic image?

I've enjoyed building model planes since I was little. Due to COVID restrictions, flying events have been pretty sparse, so I thought I'd create my own airshows. Working on this compositing project has taught me so much about Photoshop and other digital darkroom tools. My goal is a mild painterly effect; I'm not that skilled of a model builder to pull off realistic looks. Getting the quality of light on the plane right has been a problem area for me. I use a softbox some distance away from the model, kind of like the sun diffused by the clouds.

In Photoshop, I use luminosity masking to enhance the skies that I shoot from my backyard, focus stacking on the model to get it all in focus, and various selection techniques to cut out the airplane that's hot glued to a supporting rod positioned in front of a

white background. I also use texture blending to add some weathering to the plane, as well as healing on the airplane panel lines since they're way too deep for its scale. I then add some noise reduction to smooth the surface textures, lots of masking, spin blur for the prop, and even some freehand painting of navigation lights, and more weathering.

You started out shooting film. How was your transition to digital and which do you prefer?

I started being serious about photography in the early 80s. Like all hobbies, photography has its slippery slope! I started with 35mm; then a B&W darkroom; then a medium-format TLR Rolleiflex, which was my dad's; followed by a Hasselblad 500 C/M; and then on to 4x5 and 8x10 large formats. In those days, there was nothing more satisfying than looking at an 8x10 transparency.

When digital arrived, I didn't look back. I've scanned most of my cherished film images, bringing them into the digital darkroom. One of my photography passions is painting with light. I may shoot 30+ images of a single set, relying on instant feedback. I can't imagine doing that with film.

I'm starting to do more hiking as of late, and I've been thinking about going back to 4x5 B&W and shooting landscapes; an ice-cream reward for doing the hike. With large format you slow down and it becomes about the journey not the destination.

So why KelbyOne? From which instructors have you gained the most knowledge?

There are so many moving parts to digital and the digital darkroom. With the KelbyOne experience, I'm exposed to a large selection of subjects where I can learn at my own pace. The instructors are genuine and really enjoy sharing their knowledge. I learn something from every class regardless of genre. I want to thank them all!

For my type of photography, I learn the most about the mechanics from Dave Black, Glyn Dewis, and Matt Kloskowski. Their teachings, energy, and passion are inspiring. For exercising the matter between my ears and learning how to create meaningful images, my go-to person is Daniel Gregory. Lastly, the KelbyOne Community is such a treasure; I get to learn from, communicate with, and see through the eyes of photographers from all over the world. How cool is that? ■

Here Are Your Latest Online Courses



Creating the Ultimate Handheld Panorama

Learn how to capture and create the ultimate handheld panoramic photograph! Join Ramtin Kazemi as he takes you through planning and selecting a location, things to consider in your composition, gear and settings advice, methods for merging the individual frames, adding color, adding depth, and a few special finishing touches to bring it all together. By the end of the course you'll know exactly what you need to do to create a massive panorama with or without a tripod.



Unlocking Your Creativity

Join Sam Haddix as he takes you through a pragmatic approach to expanding your creativity. No matter where you are on your photographic journey you can always benefit from techniques that can help ignite new passion for your work. Sam's approach incorporates the power of analog technologies and your own powers of analysis, so grab a pen, some paper, and a willingness to exercise a creative muscle you didn't know you had.

Every week, we publish at least one new training course.
Check out these brand-new courses below:



Introduction to Compositing in Photoshop

Compositing has never been more popular than it is today, and thanks to Photoshop's tools, it's never been easier. In this class, Scott will teach you how to make great selections, match the direction of light, hide edge fringes, add shadows, unify all of the images, and all the other key techniques for creating amazingly realistic composites.



Astrophotography for Beginners

Join Erik Kuna with another astrophotography course with a focus on photographing nebulas, star fields, the moon, and the planets from a beginner's perspective. Erik will take you through the fundamentals to get you out shooting. In this class you'll learn about deep sky astrophotography, the importance of starting simple, how to select a star tracker, planning for the weather and moon phases, focusing for sharpness, mastering exposure, dealing with light pollution, stacking final images, and so much more!



GRANVILLE ISLAND: ADDING BORDERS

Where I live, restrictions on things such as foreign travel and dining out have only just begun to be lifted. As much as my family and I love to travel, I don't see ourselves going anywhere this summer. A couple of years back, however, we did make it to Vancouver, where we visited the ever-popular Granville Island. These days it would be described more accurately as a peninsula rather than an island, although the local artist community and market do give the place a distinct island-like feel.



ALL IMAGES BY MARTIN EVENING

Forty years or so ago, Granville Island was mainly an industrial area. In fact, there are still a few such businesses in operation, such as Ocean Concrete, which has really cool painted concrete silos that fit in with the artistic vibe of the local area. It's well worth checking out if you ever visit.

This photo is of an old shipping boat, just beneath the south end of Granville Bridge, that's raised on stilts. It's basically an elaborate advertising sign for a local seafood restaurant. I photographed the boat using a long lens with an effective focal length of 300mm, which nicely flattened the perspective. I sensed that

this image would work best in monochrome and that I would need to carry out a fair amount of dodging and burning to balance out the lighting to give it the desired dark and moody feel.

I also thought it would be good to add a distressed border to the image. Now, in Photoshop it's fairly easy to do this; you can just add a border image as a layer. Lightroom, of course, doesn't have layers, but there's a hack you can do using the Identity Plate feature to add a border image via the Print module to create a printed image with an interesting border. The following steps show how I first converted the image to back-and-white, adjusted the tones using the Develop module, and then added a border image via the Print module. (KelbyOne members can click [here](#) to download a smaller DNG version of this image, as well as the PNG border document, for practice purposes only.)

THE STEPS

STEP ONE: The first step was to crop the image more tightly. I selected the Crop Overlay tool (R) and marquee-dragged to select the area shown here, and then double-clicked inside the crop area to apply the crop.



Before

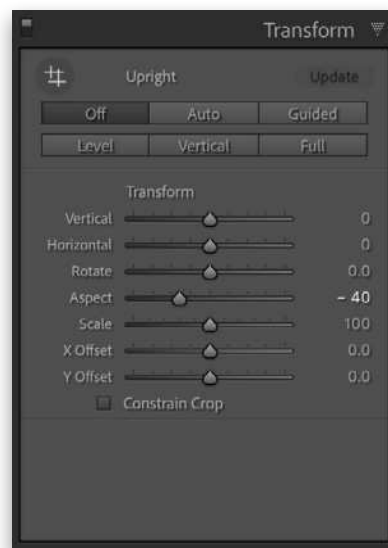


Step One



Step Two

STEP TWO: Next, I went to the Transform panel where I manually adjusted the Aspect Transform slider, setting it to -40 to stretch the image horizontally.



STEP THREE: To convert the photo to black-and-white, I clicked on the Profile Browser icon near the top right of the Basic panel (the four squares) and expanded the B&W profile section. After rolling the cursor over the different profile options, I selected the B&W 05 profile to apply the black-and-white conversion. Having done that I clicked the Close button.



STEP FOUR: Back now in the Basic panel, I adjusted the Tone sliders to set the brightness and contrast. Here, I darkened the Exposure slightly and dragged the Highlights slider to the left to preserve more detail in the highlights. At the same time, I dragged the Shadows slider to the right to bring out more tone detail in the darker areas. I also held the Shift key and double-clicked on the Whites and Blacks sliders to have Lightroom automatically set the white and black points.



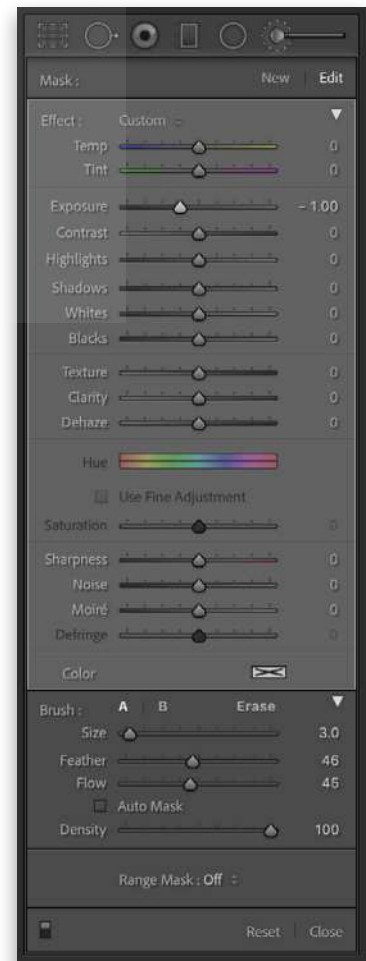
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STEP FIVE: In the Presence section below, I set the Texture slider to +50 to add more definition. I also set the Clarity slider to +25 to add more midtone contrast. If you compare this with the previous step, you'll notice how the boat hull and cabin now stand out more.



STEP SIX: I now wanted to apply a series of localized adjustments to balance the light and shade in the photograph. To start with, I selected the Adjustment Brush tool (K) and painted over the FISH sign to darken it by one stop.

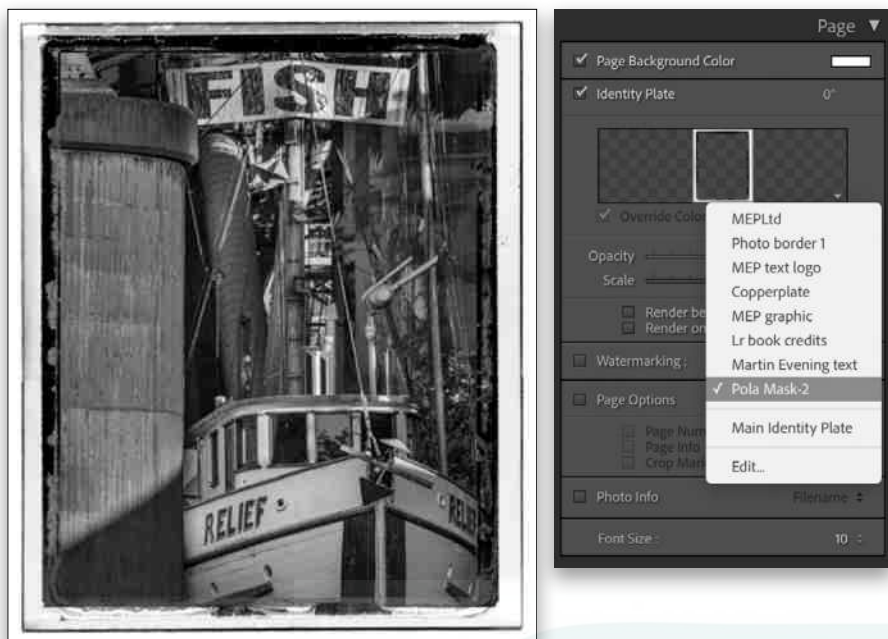


STEP SEVEN: With the Adjustment Brush tool still selected, I clicked on the New button at the top of the panel to add a new pin below the FISH sign and painted over the mast section of the boat and the shadow in the bottom-left corner, applying a lighter Exposure and softer Contrast adjustment.



STEP EIGHT: I now selected the Graduated Filter tool (M) and applied a darkening Exposure adjustment to the concrete pillar on the left. Essentially, the combined localized adjustments in Lightroom can be compared to conventional dodging-and-burning darkroom printing techniques.





STEP NINE: Now we come to the interesting part where I added a photo border to the image. To do this, I switched from the Develop module to the Print module. In the Page panel, I checked the Identity Plate option. Once enabled, I clicked on the disclosure triangle in the bottom-right corner of the Identity Plate preview and selected a custom preset from the Identity Plate menu. All I needed to do after that was to adjust the Scale slider to match the size of the image in the print preview.

The following section describes how to create a photo border and save it as an Identity Plate preset.

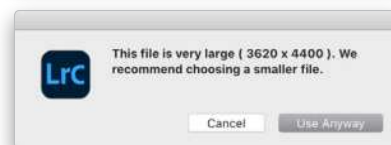
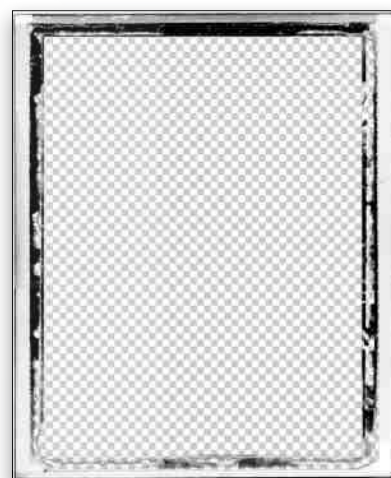
CREATING AND ADDING AN IDENTITY PLATE IMAGE

The Identity Plate can be seen in the top-left corner of the Lightroom user interface. You can customize the Identity Plate appearance using the Identity Plate Editor (choose Edit in the Identity Plate menu shown above) and save it as a custom preset. Identity Plate presets can also be added when working with the Slideshow, Print, or Web modules to add custom elements to a design.

The Identity Plate Editor lets you create either a styled text identity plate, or add a graphical identity plate. When creating a styled text Identity Plate, you simply type in the text you wish to add and choose the font type, size, and color. For example, you can use this to enter your name, choose a handwriting font, and save this as a signature Identity Plate. In Graphical mode you can add an image file. This must be a file saved in the PNG format and must normally be 57-pixels tall. This is the required height so that the graphical Identity Plate fits within the space allocated to the Identity Plate in the Lightroom user interface header section at the top left. If you're using an Identity Plate to add, say, a logo image to a print or web layout, then this restriction doesn't apply.

In this example, I used the Identity Plate Editor to add an image that was large enough to incorporate as an overlay via the Print module. Note that if you select an image that Lightroom considers too big, you'll see an error message. You should ignore this and click Use Anyway. Also, be aware that if the image you select is too big to fit within the Identity Plate Editor preview, the preview area may remain blank. Don't worry about this either. Just remember to select Save As in the drop-down menu at the bottom left to save the custom preset, using a suitable name that can help you identify it in the Identity Plate menu.

In this example, the photo border image is one that I created in Photoshop and included transparent areas. It's essential that the interior area is fully transparent. I then saved the photo border image using the PNG format. All Identity Plate images must be saved using PNG, regardless of whether they contain transparency or not. ■





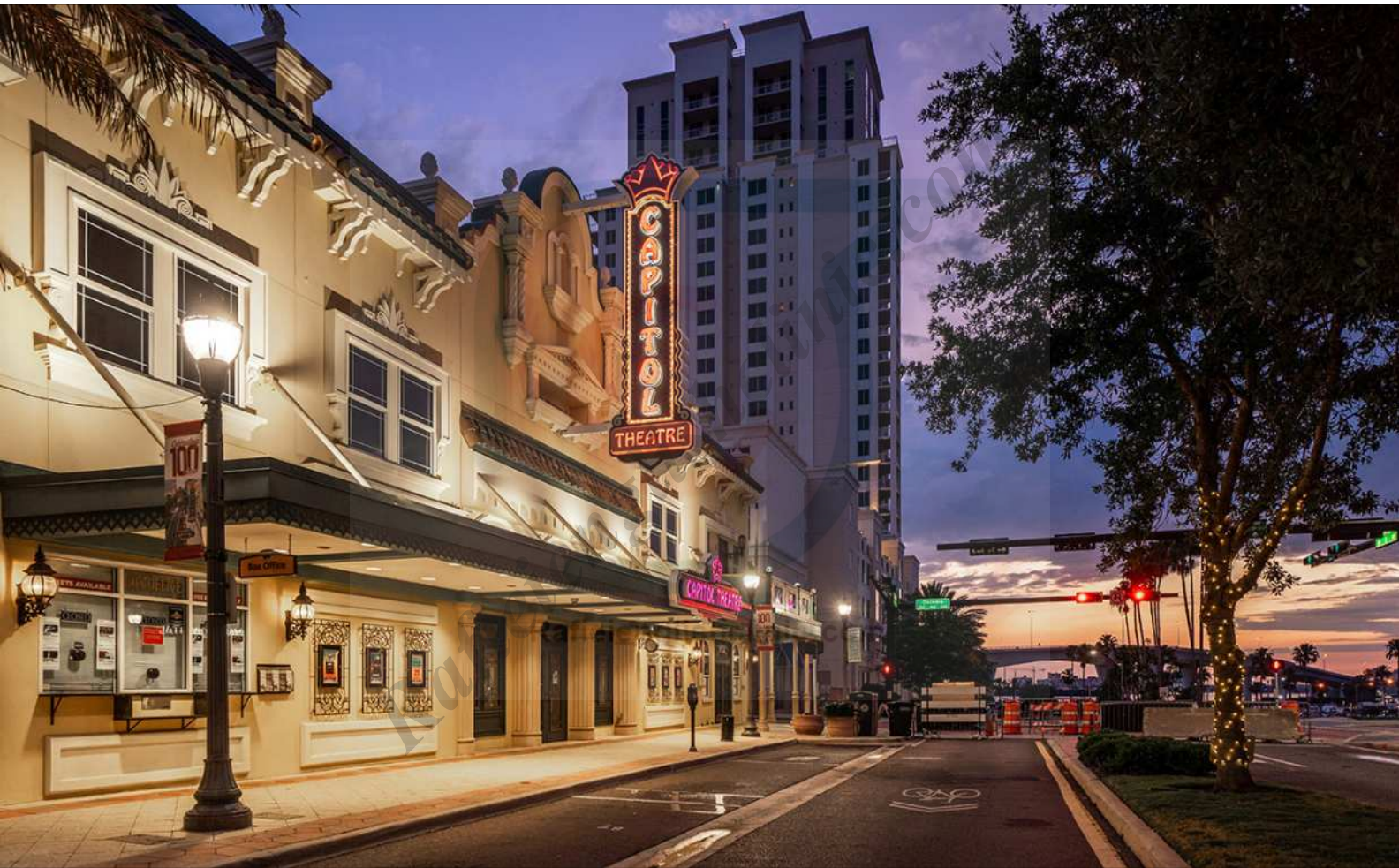
SERGE RAMELLI

LIGHTROOM LABORATORY



THE MAGIC 15-MINUTE WINDOW: THE BEST SECRET FOR CITYSCAPE PHOTOS

After photographing cities all around the globe for the past 15 years, I learned the hard way when the best time of day is to shoot. After I learned that lesson, I saved a lot of time because I knew exactly what to shoot and when to shoot it. So let's get to it!

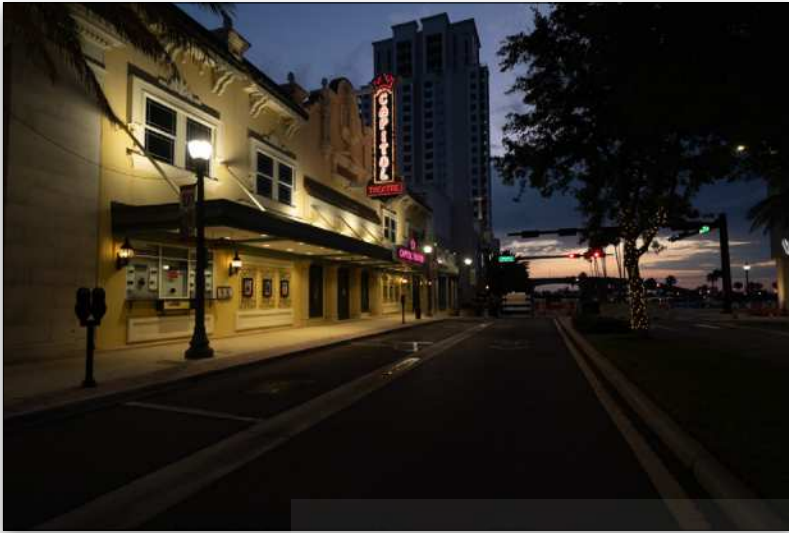


FIND YOUR SPOT AND WAIT FOR THE GOOD LIGHT

First, go out before it's time to shoot and find a good composition with strong leading lines. Look for a cool foreground element, with your subject as a middle-ground element, and the sky as the background. Also try different angles to see what creates a clearer message, as well as what's more aesthetically pleasing.

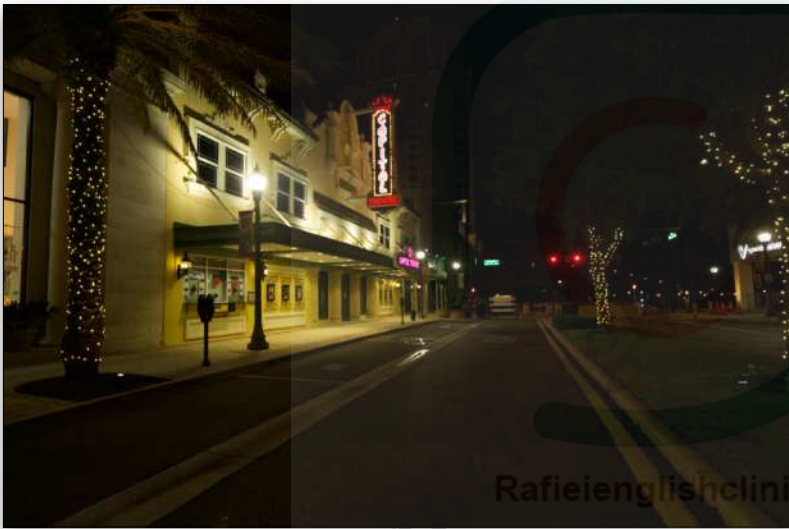
ALL IMAGES BY SERGE RAMELLI





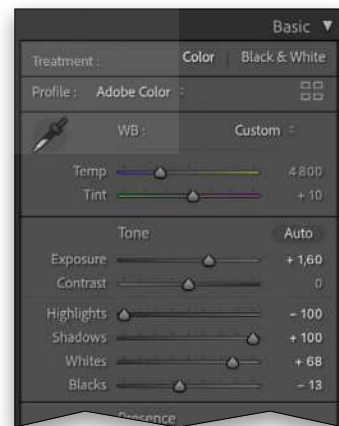
THE 15-MINUTE WINDOW IS KEY

Once you figure out your composition, be patient and wait for the perfect light, at which point, it's time to start shooting. If there's one time of day you should take a cityscape photo it's as soon as the city lights switch on, which gives you about 15 minutes or less to get the shot. That's the truth of it; there's just that magical window where the sun is below the horizon but the sky still has some good texture and the buildings are shining through with light. This is called the blue hour.



DON'T SHOOT CITYSCAPES AT NIGHT

When you miss that magic window and the sky is black, the details in the sky are no longer there. That contrast between the city and sky is just too important so you won't get good results. There are exceptions to the rule, of course, such as Times Square where you have so much light and can barely see the sky. But other than that, I wouldn't advise shooting cityscape photos at night.



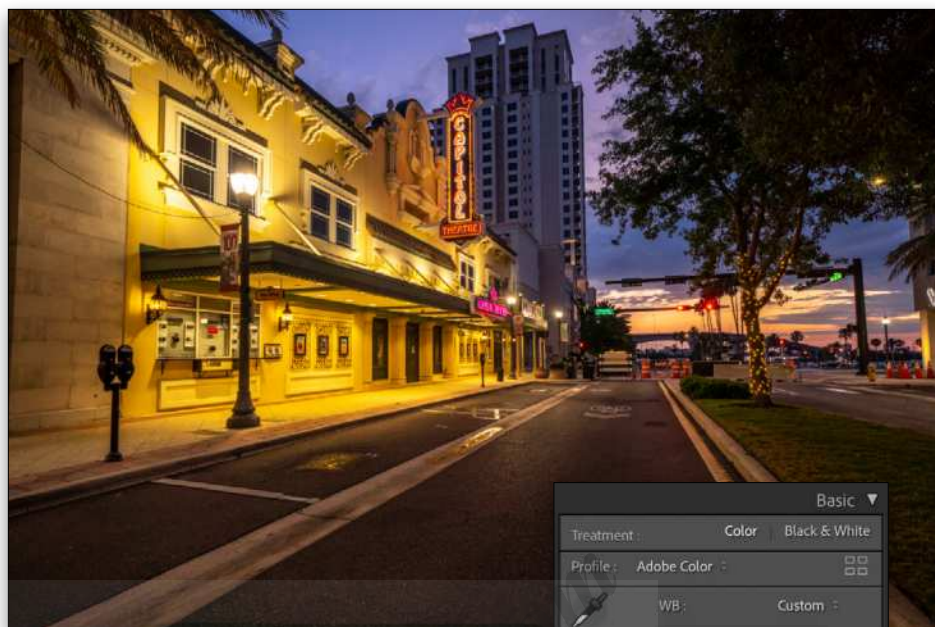
DEVELOPING YOUR BEST SHOT TAKEN DURING THE 15-MINUTE WINDOW

Let's go into the basic retouch first in Lightroom Classic. In the Basic panel, we opened up the Shadows to +100, brought down the Highlights to -100, and then boosted the Exposure to 1.60. We then set the black point (Blacks) to -13 and the white point (Whites) to +68.



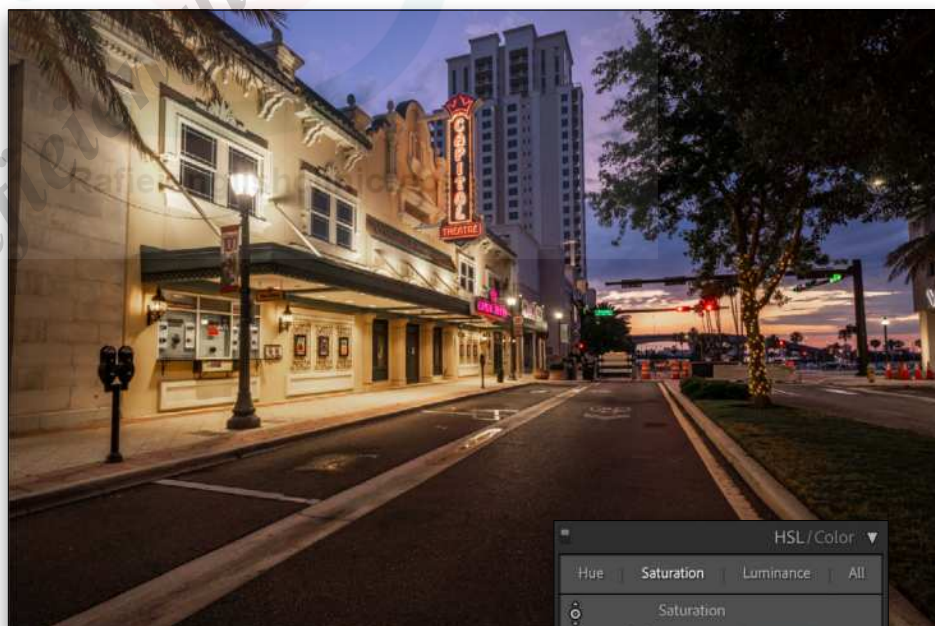
FINDING THE RIGHT WHITE BALANCE IS IMPORTANT

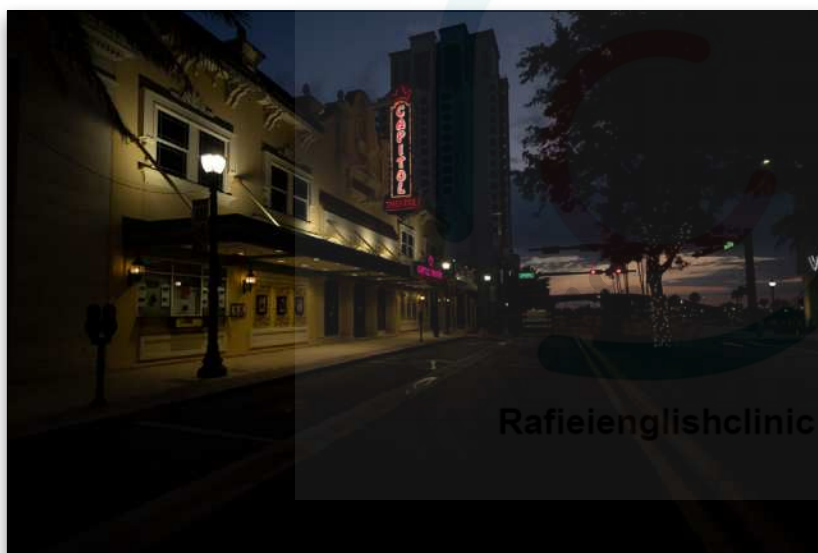
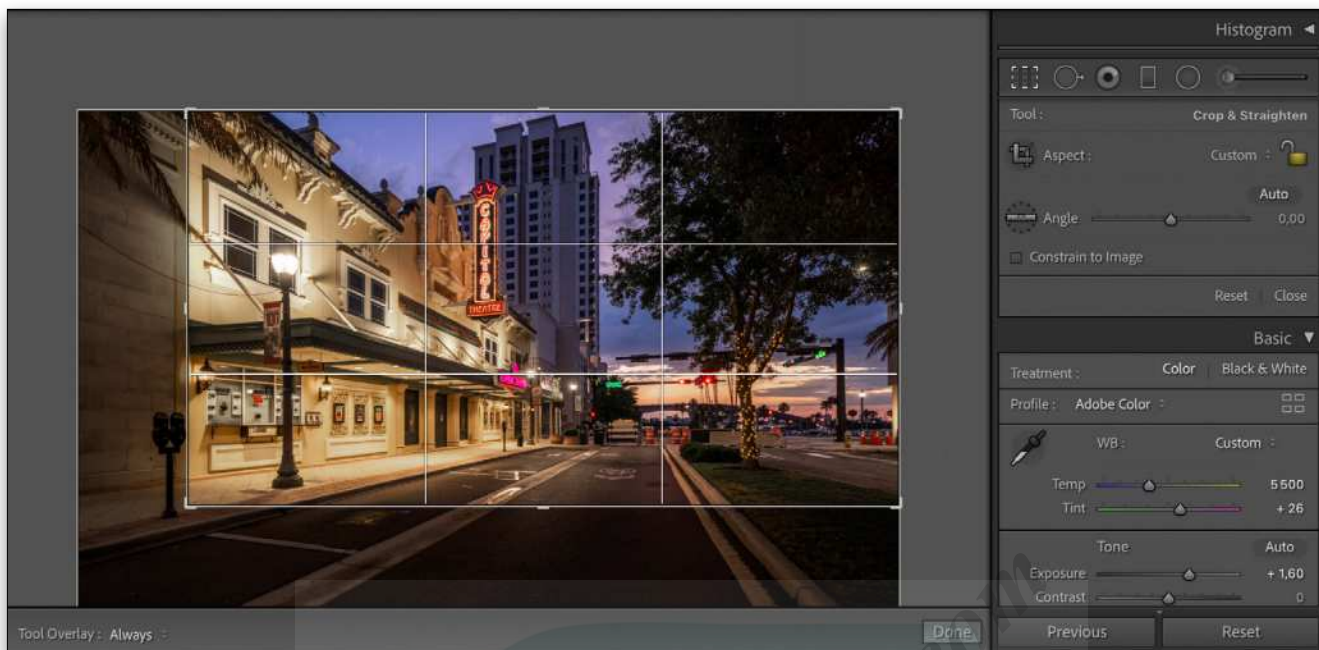
For white balance, you can select a preset in the WB drop-down menu near the top of the Basic panel, and then tweak it. For the time of day in this photo, I chose Daylight and then added some magenta by boosting the Tint to +26 to kill the yellow/green color cast.



AND NOW THE SECRET SAUCE TO RETOUCHING YOUR BLUE-HOUR PHOTO

Go to the HSL panel, and click on the Saturation tab. Grab the Targeted Adjustment tool (TAT), which is the little circle icon at the top left of the panel. When the TAT is active, the icon will display arrows above and below the circle, indicating the directions you should drag with the tool. In this example, we're going to click on the strong yellow color that doesn't look so great in this image and drag downward to lower its saturation. You'll see the corresponding Saturation sliders in the HSL panel change as you drag.





Before

CROP IT TO MAKE IT MORE CINEMATIC

To make your photo even more dynamic you can use the Crop Overlay tool (R) to crop it so it's more panoramic. I think cropping to a 16x9 ratio makes most images better, not necessarily for social media but it's great for print.

So there you go! That's how you take and retouch your blue-hour photos captured during that 15-minute magic window. So don't miss out on that perfect time of day, and remember to always have fun. ■

Questions & Comments



After



A LOOK AT THE LATEST UPDATES TO SHOOTING TETHERED

The June 2021 update to Lightroom Classic (check out my article on [Lightroom Killer Tips](#) for all the details) brought two changes to its tethering function, so I wanted to take a closer look at how those changes can impact a tethering workflow. In addition, I'll share how you can utilize third-party solutions for tethering if the native functionality isn't giving you what you want.



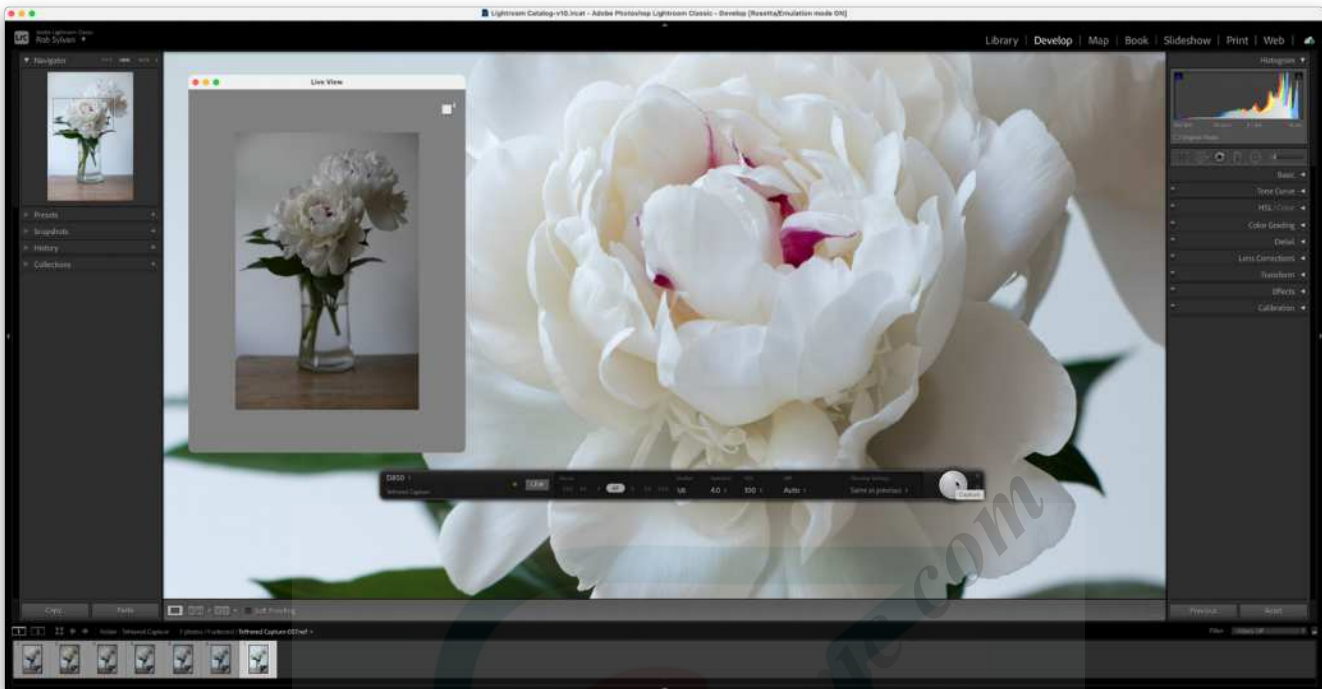
One thing I've found to be true across all areas of photography is that every decision we make involves a calculation of all the pros and cons (support, cost, functionality, ease of use, quality, speed, robustness of performance, etc.) that matter to our own unique workflows, and then moving forward with the best choice we can make at the time. Also, knowing that this is a moving target, as all those parameters change over time. This is certainly true when

it comes to tethering in Lightroom Classic. This update is most welcome, and has improved the experience, but it still may not check all the boxes for some.

LIVE VIEW UPDATE FOR NIKON

The Live View function for supported Nikon cameras has finally moved out of Beta release and is on par with the functionality that has existed for Canon cameras since

ALL IMAGES BY ROB SYLVAN



last October. The list of supported **Canon** and **Nikon** cameras for Live View, however, is notably smaller than the **list** of all Canon and Nikon cameras supported by tethering in general, so be sure to check those links to see if your camera is supported. And yes, it's still limited to Canon and Nikon (another reason why I explored third-party alternatives for other cameras).

STARTING TETHERED CAPTURE

Before we get to using Live View, we have to get the tethered connection started, so let's go through the steps.

STEP ONE: Connect your camera, via USB, to your computer and turn it on.

Note: Lightroom Classic doesn't support tethering wirelessly, but you can utilize the **Auto Import functionality** in conjunction with a wireless solution by having the photos saved to a designated watched folder so that they're automatically imported into Lightroom Classic as they land in that folder.

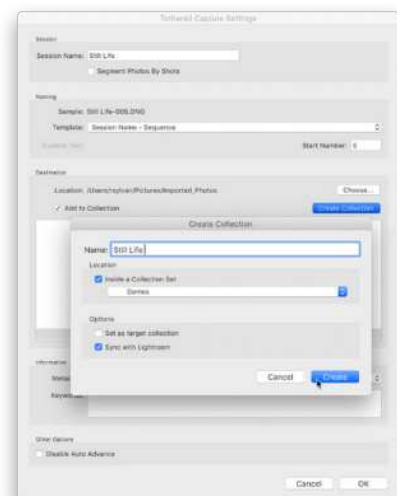
STEP TWO: In Lightroom Classic, go to File>Tethered Capture>Start Tethered Capture to open the Tethered Capture Settings dialog.

STEP THREE: Configure the Tethered Capture Settings dialog. The Session Name will be used to create the folder where these photos are stored. You can also use that Session Name as part of the filename or choose

a preferred filename template. Be sure to choose the desired location in the Destination section of the panel so the photos go where you want them to go, and alternatively, you can also check the Add to Collection box and choose an existing collection or create a new collection to have the photos added there, as well. Just like a regular import, you can also apply your metadata template and any relevant keywords at this time.

By default, when shooting tethered the focus will shift to each new photo as it appears in Lightroom Classic, but you can disable that behavior by checking the Disable Auto Advance checkbox at the bottom.

Note: If you have enabled syncing of your catalog to the Lightroom cloud, you can add photos to a synced collection, and a smart preview of each photo will also be uploaded to the cloud as part of your session.





STEP FOUR: Once configured, click OK to have Lightroom Classic detect your camera and open the floating tethered capture bar, which will display the name of your camera and allow you to control its operation.

If all goes to plan, you're ready to start shooting. If you encountered any problems along the way, or if your camera wasn't detected, please follow these [troubleshooting steps](#).

CONTROLLING THE CAMERA

There are two ways you can control your camera while tethered: from the camera itself or using the floating capture bar. You'll still need to use your camera to do anything involving its menu system, changing shooting modes, exposure compensation, and so on; however, depending on the shooting mode you're in, the capture bar can be used to adjust shutter speed, aperture, ISO, and white balance, as well as pressing the shutter button. For example, with my camera in Aperture Priority mode, I can change the aperture, but not shutter speed.

While the floating capture bar can be moved around the screen, it may also seem like it's always in the way.

If you hold down the Option (PC: Alt) key, the X icon (used for ending the session) on the capture bar changes to a - (minus sign) that, when clicked, will reduce the capture bar to just the shutter button (use that same shortcut to bring it back to full size). If it's still in your way, press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to completely hide it from view without ending the session, and that same shortcut will make it visible again.

On the subject of shortcuts, pressing F12 will trip the shutter with the capture bar visible or hidden. Depending on your keyboard and operating system, you may need to hold the fn key in conjunction with pressing the F12 key to make that work.



USING LIVE VIEW

If your camera is supported by Live View, then you'll see a button named Live on the capture bar. Click that to enable Live View shooting. Once enabled, you'll see the Live View window displaying what's in front of your camera. If you're shooting in portrait orientation, click the rotation button in the upper-right of the Live View



window to rotate the display until it's correctly oriented to how the camera is positioned.

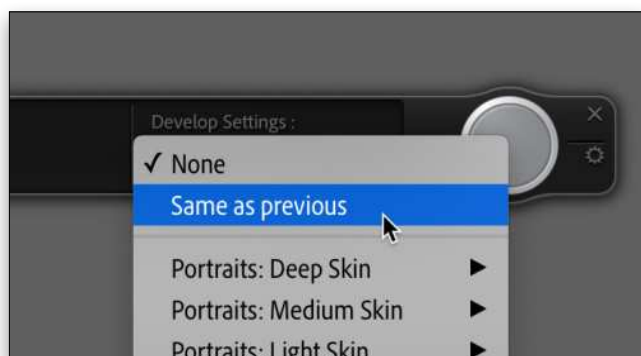
Note: On my Nikon D850, I had to press the Lv button on the camera so that I could also control the settings on the camera once Live View was engaged in Lightroom Classic.

If your camera is set to auto focus, you can use the AF button on the capture bar to focus the camera. I found this to work fine on my Nikon D850, but the focus controls were disabled completely when I switched the lens to manual focus mode (supposedly focus could still be controlled by the capture bar in this mode, but that was not my experience).

SHOOTING TETHERED

With the camera connected and the session started, it's time to make some photographs. Clearly the main benefits of shooting tethered, whether you have Live View or not, is to be able to see the photos on your much-larger computer screen right after capture. This allows for checking focus, adjusting composition and lighting, and seeing smaller details while you're shooting, as the photos are saved to your computer. An additional benefit is that you can begin the editing process while you're still shooting.

The first step to editing is to customize your **Raw Defaults** to include desired settings. From there, using the capture bar, you can choose to apply a preset that will be applied as each photo appears onscreen. Alternatively, if you're using a gray card, color checker, or some other technique for adjusting white balance, you can take a photo with that in the scene, then use the Develop module to make any adjustments you wish (such as white balance), and then choose Same as Previous from the menu to have all the settings you applied to the first photo automatically applied to the rest of the photos in the session. This can be a huge timesaver.

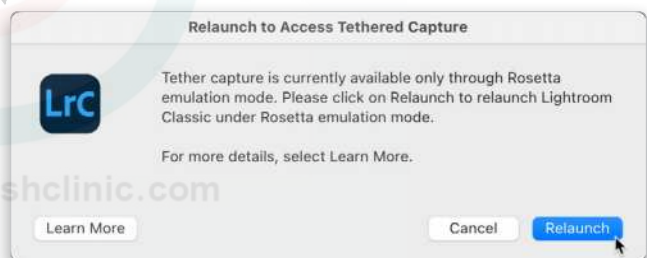


When the session is complete, click the X on the capture bar to exit tethered capture, turn off your camera, and disconnect the USB cable.

With this latest update, the tethering functionality between supported Canon and Nikon cameras is the same, except for one key feature that I still fail to understand why it's not included. On Canon, the photos taken during the tethered session are saved to the camera's memory card as well as to your computer, which seems like a no-brainer in a situation as prone to failure as tethering; however, this has never been true for shooting with Nikon, and remains the case today. I do hope this feature is added to Nikon camera tethered shooting at some point in the future.

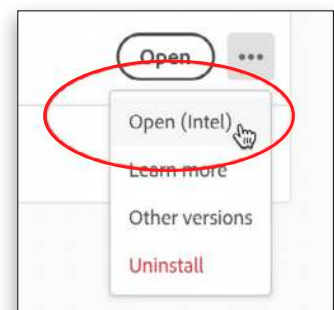
SHOOTING TETHERED ON APPLE SILICON

In the June 2021 update, Lightroom Classic can now run natively on Macs with the Apple silicon chip, but there's a caveat when it comes to tethering on a Mac with the M1 chip. To tether, you'll need to run in Rosetta emulation mode. By default, on an Apple silicon device you'll be running in native mode if you just launch Lightroom Classic, which in my experience, has been great so far. If you try to start a tethering session in this mode, however, you'll be prompted to relaunch in Rosetta.



Clicking Relaunch will exit you from Lightroom Classic and then relaunch (be patient) in Rosetta. Once reopened, you'll have to start the tethering process all over again (it doesn't relaunch into tethering), and away you go! Once your tethering session is complete, just exit Lightroom Classic and, the next time you launch, it will default back to running natively.

If you know you're going to be shooting tethered, you can launch Lightroom Classic into the Intel version from the Adobe Creative Cloud application manager directly into Rosetta mode, and then just get on with tethering.



LOOKING AT ALTERNATIVES

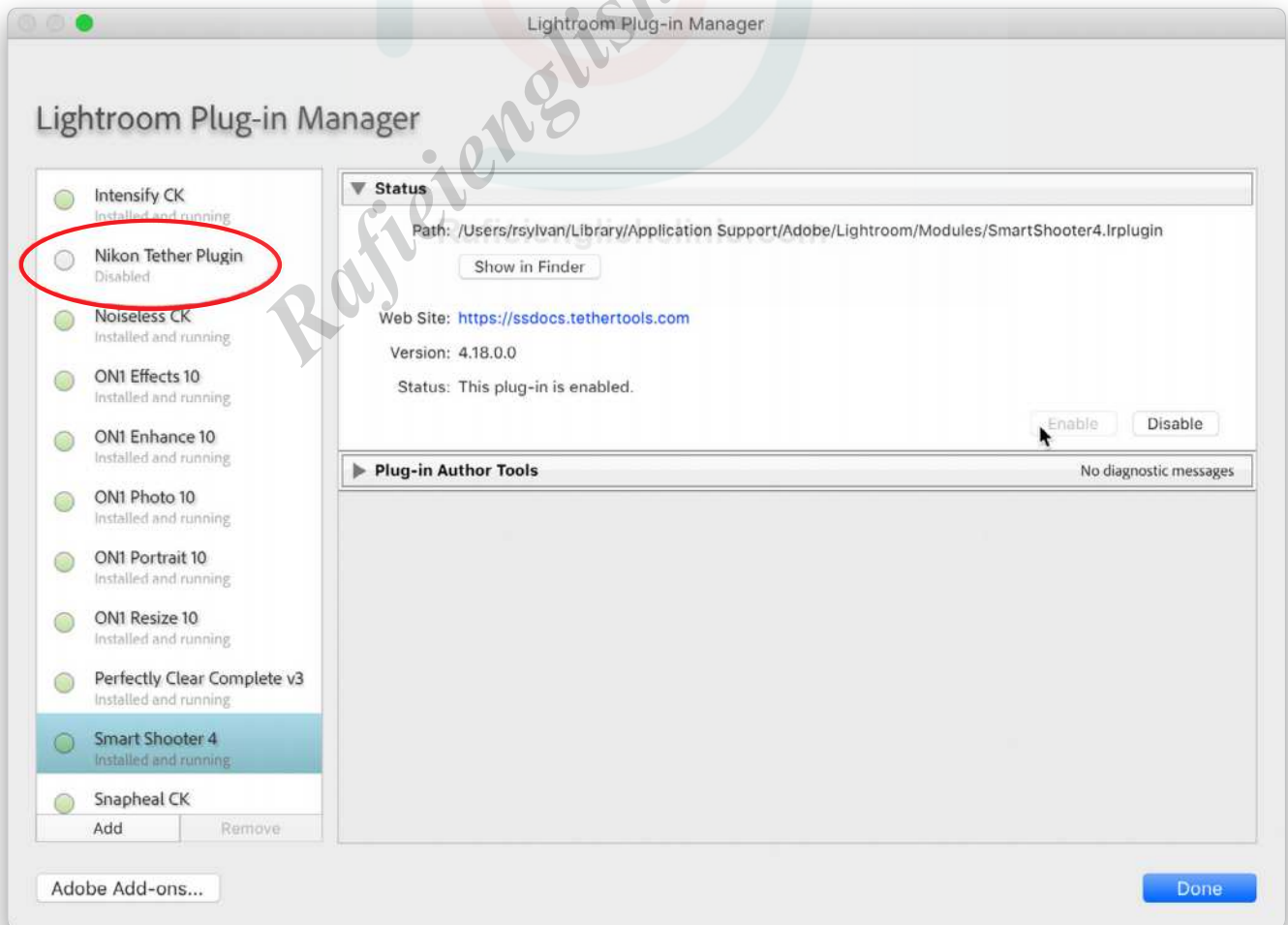
Native tethering has come a long way in Lightroom Classic, and if it checks all the boxes for you, then look no further and go make pictures. If your camera isn't supported (yes, my Sony friends, I'm thinking of you), a feature you need isn't included, or perhaps you want to try a third-party solution, then there are options out there. One of the most comprehensive lists of **tethering software options** I've seen is maintained by Tether Tools. Yes, their own software solution is included, but so are options from Sony, Panasonic, Canon, Nikon, Hasselblad, etc., as well as other third-party vendors whose products support a variety of camera manufacturers.

In most cases, when using a third-party software solution for tethering, you don't use Lightroom Classic's tethering function at all. Instead, you use the third-party software to interface with your camera and facilitate the saving of photos to a designated "watched" folder and you configure Lightroom Classic's **Auto Import function** to watch that folder (as I mentioned earlier with wireless solutions). There truly are solutions for many, many more cameras than Lightroom Classic

supports, as well as a lot of specialized features (such as focus stacking and astrophotography). Some are free and some require a fee, so you'll need to click through to the respective vendor's site to learn the details.

I was most interested in Tether Tools' own Smart Shooter 4 software because it actually plugs directly into Lightroom Classic and it supports Sony as well as Canon and Nikon. Smart Shooter costs \$69.95 (or \$195.95 for the Pro version that supports barcode scanning and multiple cameras), but you can get a free trial. (Tether Tools did give me a copy of the standard version for evaluation purposes, but I'm not otherwise affiliated with them.)

With Smart Shooter, you can use it either as a standalone third-party tethering solution (using Auto Import) or you can install the plug-in to avoid the need for Auto Import and have the photos automatically added to the catalog, just like the native tethering solution. *Note:* At the time of this writing, the Smart Shooter plug-in supports Sony and Nikon, but Canon support is still pending an update from Adobe. You can use the standalone Smart Shooter software with Canon cameras.



Smart Shooter is truly a dedicated tethering solution and has way more features and options than Lightroom Classic's native tethering capability. One feature I was especially pleased to see is the ability for Nikon cameras to save to the memory card during a tethered session, so clearly it can be done (you must first enable this in Smart Shooter's preferences). If using the plug-in version, you'll need to install it from Smart Shooter's preferences (you'll definitely want to go through the [user documentation](#) to get the latest info), and then make sure it's enabled in Lightroom Classic's Plug-in Manager.

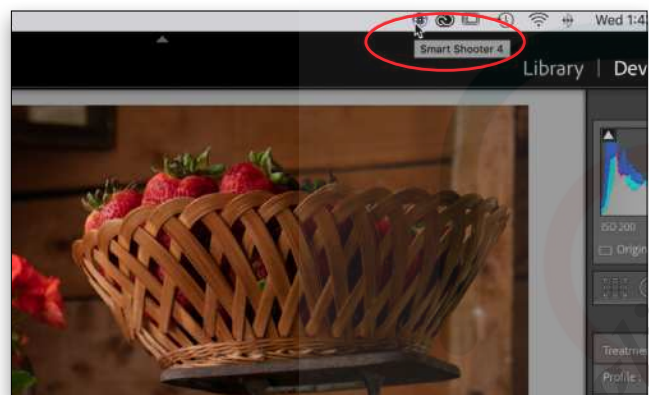
Note: For Nikon cameras, you'll want to disable the Nikon Tether Plugin so that the Smart Shooter plug-in does the job instead (see previous page).

RUNNING SMART SHOOTER AS A PLUG-IN

Once installed and configured, using the plug-in follows the same steps as native tethering. The exception is that once the tethering connection is made, you'll see Smart Shooter as a service in the Mac Menu bar (PC: Taskbar).

You can either use the floating capture bar or use the Smart Shooter service running in the background (exit Lightroom Classic from Full Screen mode to see the service running) to launch the full version of Smart Shooter and take advantage of all its options.

Yes, I did switch to a Sony camera in that bottom figure to test it out, and it worked great. Even though I used the full Smart Shooter interface, all photos were added directly to the catalog because I started from the plug-in, which is the best of both worlds when it comes to features and functionality. I'm hoping the update for Canon users to the plug-in comes soon.



As I said at the beginning, we're always faced with making the best choice for our needs at the time, and many of these factors are continually evolving (I have to assume that tethering becomes part of the native functionality on Macs with Apple silicon chips at some point in the future). Luckily, there seems to be a lot of options to consider. ■

[Questions & Comments](#)





GRFX STUDIO PRO AI

Auto FX Software is pretty proud of its newest update, [GRFX Studio Pro AI](#). I looked at the GRFX (pronounced “graphics”) Studio Pro version back in Issue 50 of *Lightroom Magazine*, walking through things such as Sky Replacement, adding stars, B&W, and some of the cool border effects.



ALL IMAGES BY SEAN MCCORMACK

As the name implies, the plug-in/standalone contains loads of different effects you can add to enhance your photos. In fact, there are more than 170 pregenerated AI-art effects that range from pencil to pastel effects. There’s also the new IntelliArt FX, which lets you drop in any art style, and the plug-in will re-create the look on your photo.

WHO IS GRFX STUDIO PRO AI FOR?

Anyone really. Auto FX hopes that even a six-year-old could use this to edit photos. Simplicity is the key

here. There’s a full range of controls that allow you to edit the photo within the application, without the need for a host. For “Maximum Workflow” users, however, you’ll probably do the bulk of your edits in your host application (Photoshop and Lightroom), and go to the plug-in for the special looks you get from GRFX Studio Pro AI.

After running the installer, you can launch the plug-in from the Filter menu in Photoshop, or the Photo>Edit In menu in Lightroom. One thing to note is that the use of smart objects in Photoshop isn’t available with this plug-in.

Note: GRFX Studio Pro AI is constantly progressing, so you may have additional features that aren't covered here. You may even have a slightly different UI.

GRFX BENEFITS

As with most plug-ins, there has to be a reason to justify its use, and with Photoshop, it's about speed; with Lightroom, it's about getting looks you can't get in the app. You can create light rays in Photoshop quite easily, but it's far quicker to use an app, especially if you want to make changes easily. It's always a question of whether the cost of the plug-in gains back enough time to make it worth the purchase. The ultimate arbiter of this is you the user, though; but hopefully, this walkthrough of some of the features will help you decide.

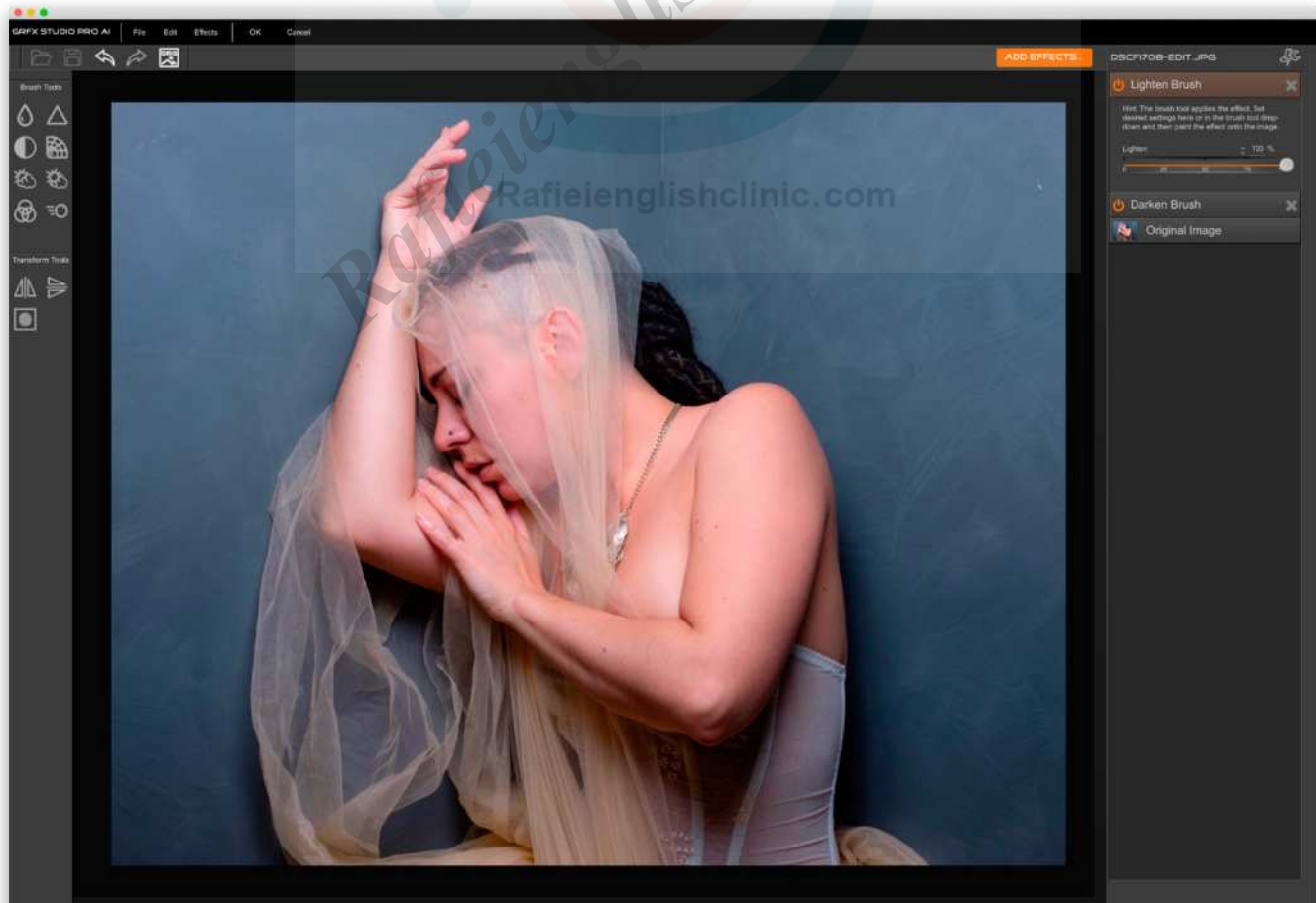
GETTING AROUND

There are changes in the layout with this new version. The most obvious is the set of tools on the top left

of the interface that include Blur, Sharpen, Contrast, Tint, Saturation, and Motion brushes. There are also Darken and Lighten brushes, giving you access to dodge-and-burn techniques. Brushing in general is slightly hampered in-app by not having shortcuts for the size and feather, though Auto FX is open to adding them.

There are also Transform tools for flipping the image, as well as a Mask tool. Masking wasn't ready at the time of this writing, but it will allow even more masking options on top of the per-effect masking that already exists in the app. The standalone version of the app has additional tools, such as Crop, which can't be used with the Photoshop plug-in because Photoshop expects the same size image to return from a plug-in.

On the right is the FX Palette, where you build up the various effects you want on the photo. For example, as you use the Darken or Lighten brush, the controls appear as listed here.



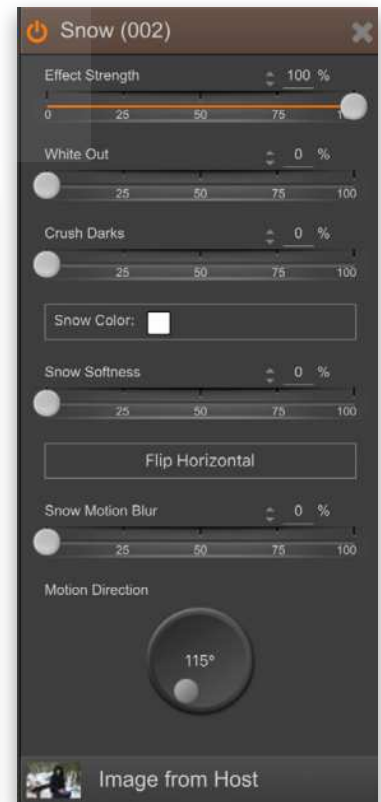
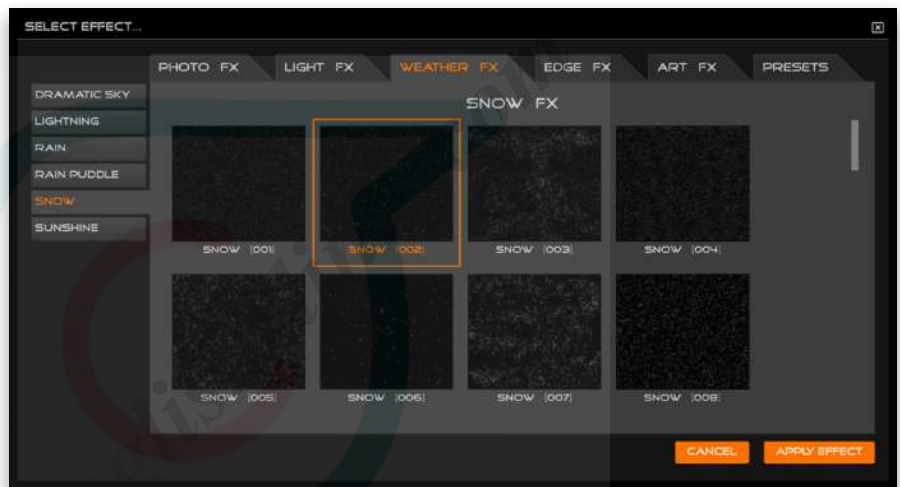
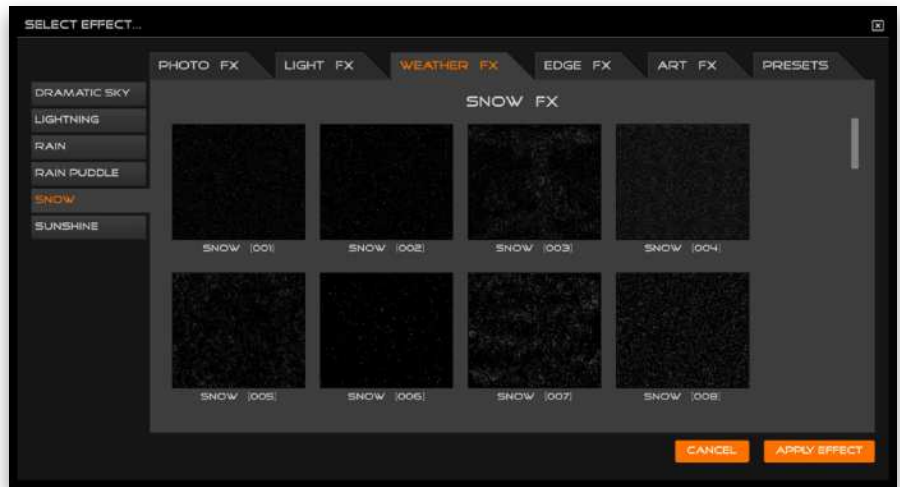
WEATHER FX

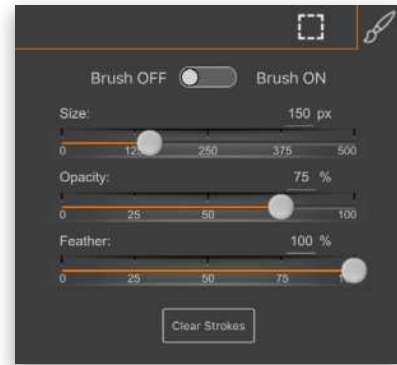
Weather FX covers quite a range of possibilities, from sky replacement to rain. The article in Issue 50 of *Lightroom Magazine* looked at the former, so here we'll take a look at Snow. One great feature is the layering and masking that can be done with each effect allowing you to build your own look.

STEP ONE: Click Add Effects above the image preview on the right to load the Select Effect dialog. From the top section, choose the Weather FX tab, and from the left side, choose Snow.

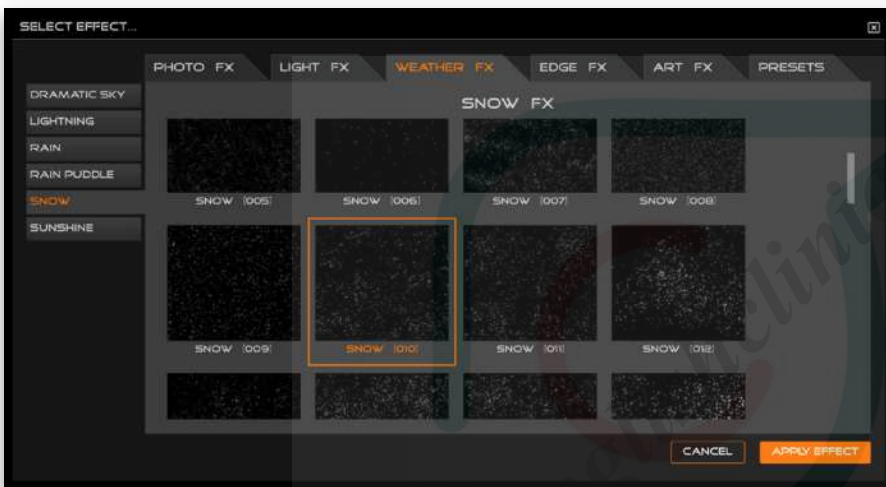
STEP TWO: To get an effective-looking snow scene, you can build up layers of snow. It's best to start with smaller snowflakes for the background, then work up toward larger flakes, so let's choose Snow (002) and click Apply Effect.

STEP THREE: This will close the Select Effect dialog and place the Snow (002) controls on the FX Palette, creating the first layer of snow.

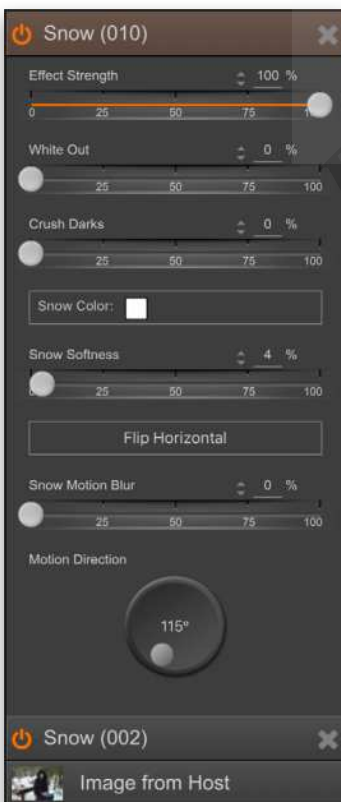




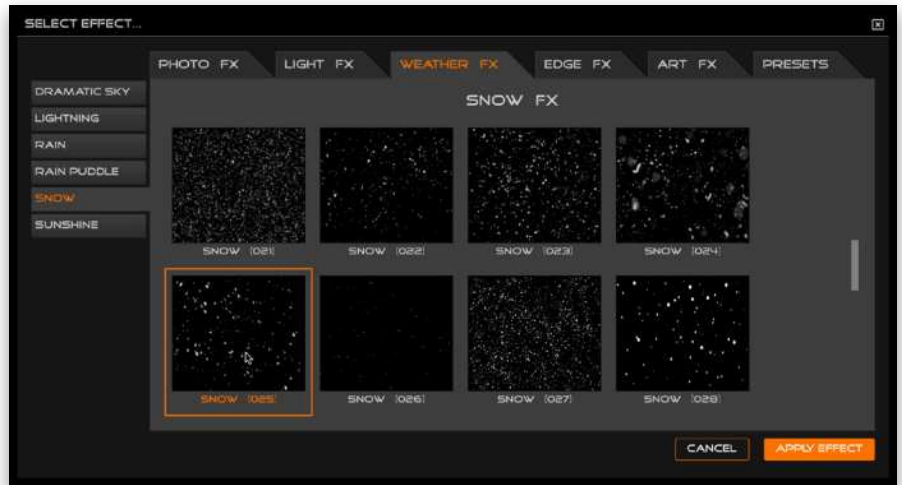
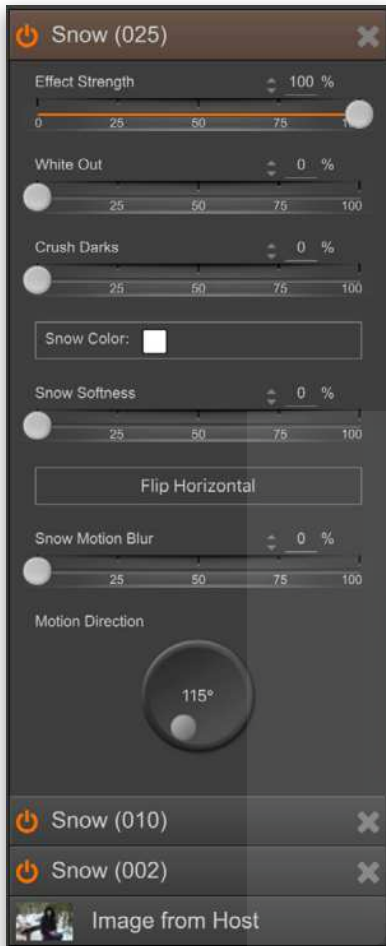
STEP FOUR: You can make this instance of snow appear behind your subject by masking it off using the brush. The brush is active as soon as the effect is applied and, by default, it's set to Brush Off the effect. To change the brush Size, Opacity, and Feather, hover your cursor over the arrows just below the Brush icon above the preview area. Brush off anything that's in front of your subject. You can use a lower Opacity setting and build up the removal of the snow for smoother transitions.



STEP FIVE: Add your midground snow next. Snow (010) in the Select Effect dialog is a good option. Use the brush to remove snow from the subject's face.

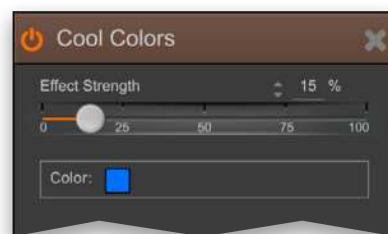


STEP SIX: The final snow layer is for your foreground. Snow (025) will work for this. Again, use the brush to remove snow from the face.

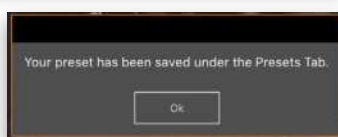
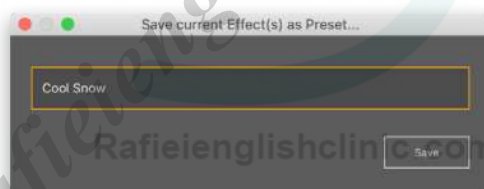
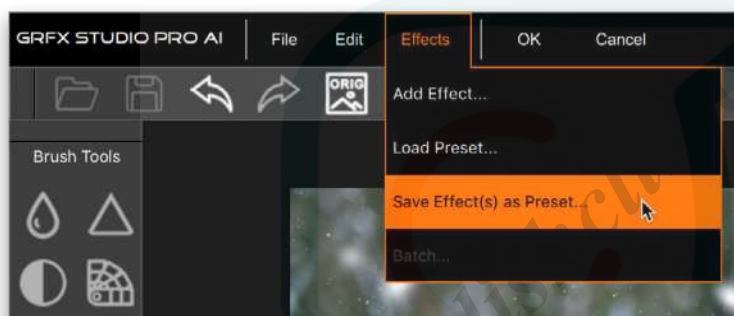


STEP SEVEN: You can change the apparent depth of field using the Snow Softness. Set it to around 10% for a more blurred look. You can also change the snowfall look by increasing the Snow Motion Blur (34%) and the Motion Direction (64°).





STEP EIGHT: To top off the look, you could go for a cooler tone in the photo. From the Photo FX tab in the Select Effect dialog, choose Color on the left, and then Cool Colors. Click Apply Effect. If you want to change the color, click the color swatch to bring up a Color Picker, and then use the Effect Strength slider to get the look you want. We went for a deeper blue and decreased the Effect Strength to 15%. If you're happy with your look, and feel you might use it again, it's worth saving as a preset.



PRESETS

Presets in GRFX Studio Pro AI show up in their own tab in the Select Effect dialog, giving them equal weight with any other effect.

STEP NINE: To create one from the look you've just built, go to the Effects menu at the top left of the GRFX Studio Pro AI interface, and choose Save Effect(s) as a Preset.

STEP 10: Give it a recognizable name. On creation, you'll get a thumbnail showing the look, but a good description will also help; so give it a descriptive name (we used "Cool Snow") and click Save.

STEP 11: On saving, the app lets you know where the preset appears.

STEP 12: Go to the Presets section of the Select Effect dialog to see your preset. The Preset can be used in the same way as the internal effects and can give you a great starting position for new images.

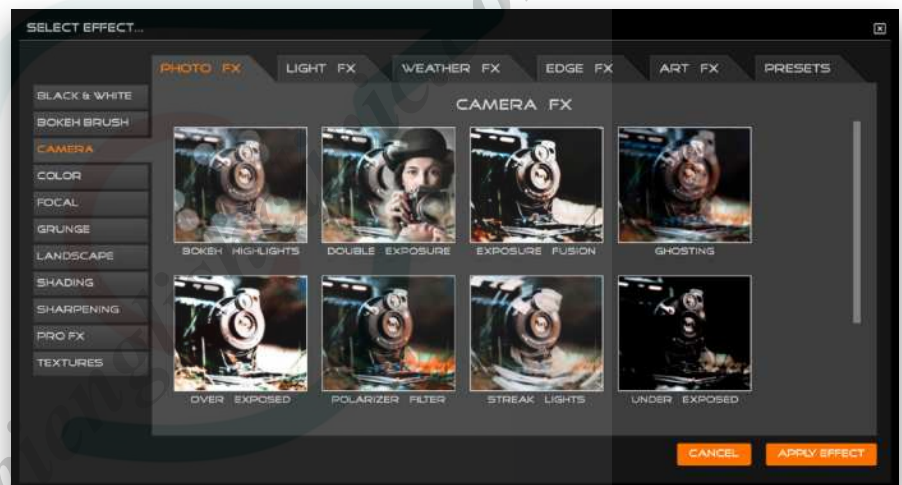


DOUBLE EXPOSURE

The double-exposure look is still quite cool. It's pretty easy to do in Photoshop, but not so much in Lightroom. We appreciate that some people avoid Photoshop as beginners because it has a huge learning curve; obviously, *Photoshop User* magazine is here to help, but in the meantime, here's how you can do it in GRFX Studio Pro AI.

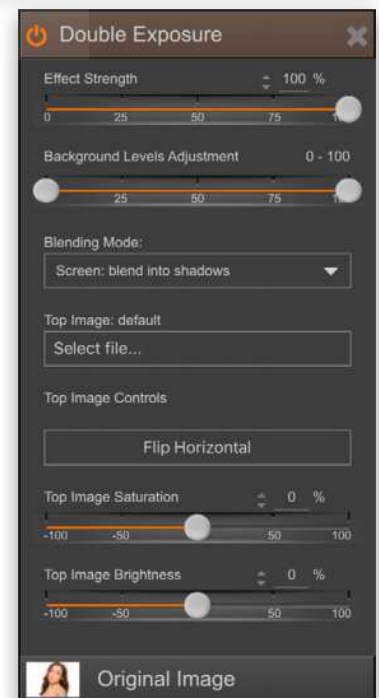


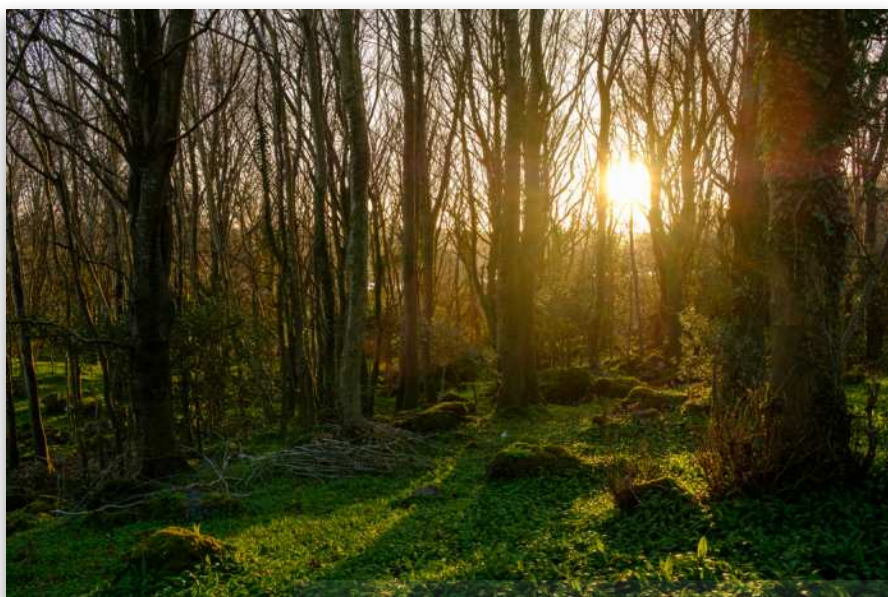
STEP ONE: It's important to choose a good image with which to start. This is a studio shot with a white background. You can get this effect shooting outside on an overcast day, or shooting with a window behind your subject. The reason for doing this is the default blend mode for the double exposure is Screen. With Screen mode, any white areas on the bottom image won't have the top image rendered within them. Super easy for blending!



STEP TWO: With your main image open in GRFX Studio Pro AI, go to the Photo FX tab in the Select Effect dialog, and choose Camera on the left. Click the Double Exposure effect, and click Apply Effect to get started.

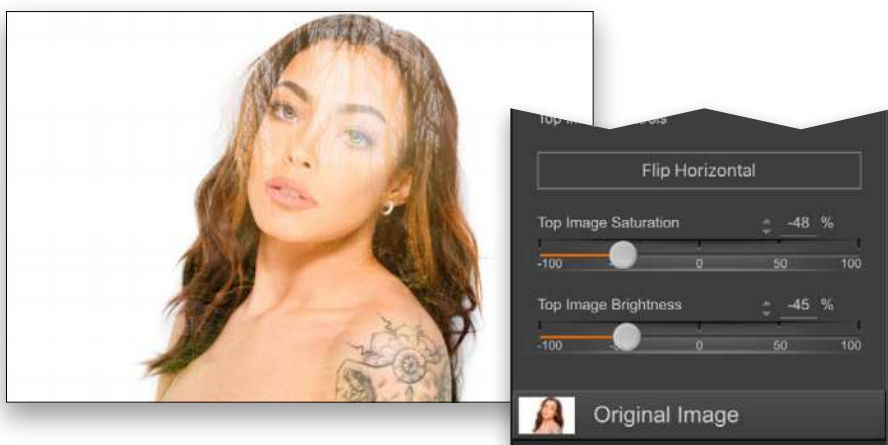
STEP THREE: Double Exposure opens with a default image with which to work. You can use the Select File button in the FX



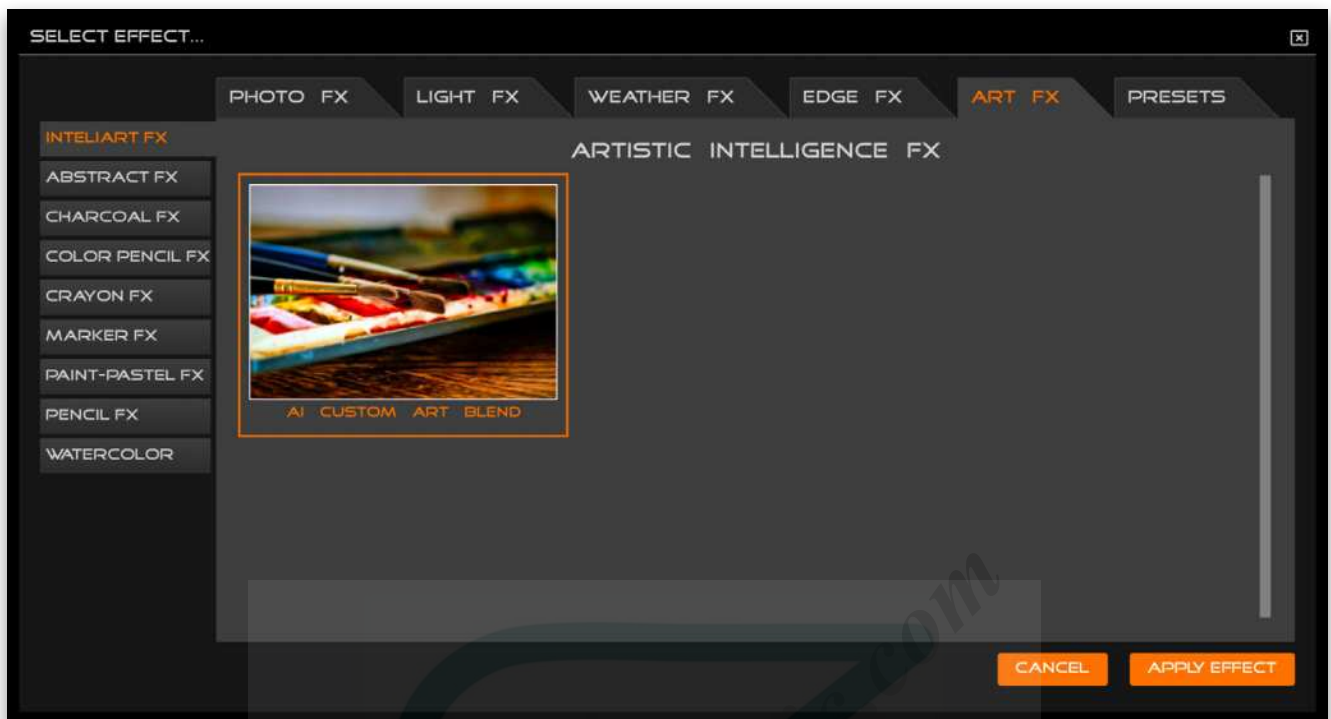


Palette to choose an image of your own, which will help keep your image looking unique. Here's the image that we'll be using.

STEP FOUR: Our top image has the sun, which could look good over her left eye. You can move the top image around and expand it using the Transformation tool, which is the first tool above the image preview where you saw the Brush tool earlier. Drag a corner to resize it; click-and-drag anywhere in the bounding box to move it over her left eye.



STEP FIVE: To complete the double exposure, you can tweak the top image settings. First, there has been an increase in the overall image saturation, so use Top Image Saturation to reduce this effect by setting the slider to -48%. The overall image has become quite bright, so use a Top Image Brightness of -45% to fix this.

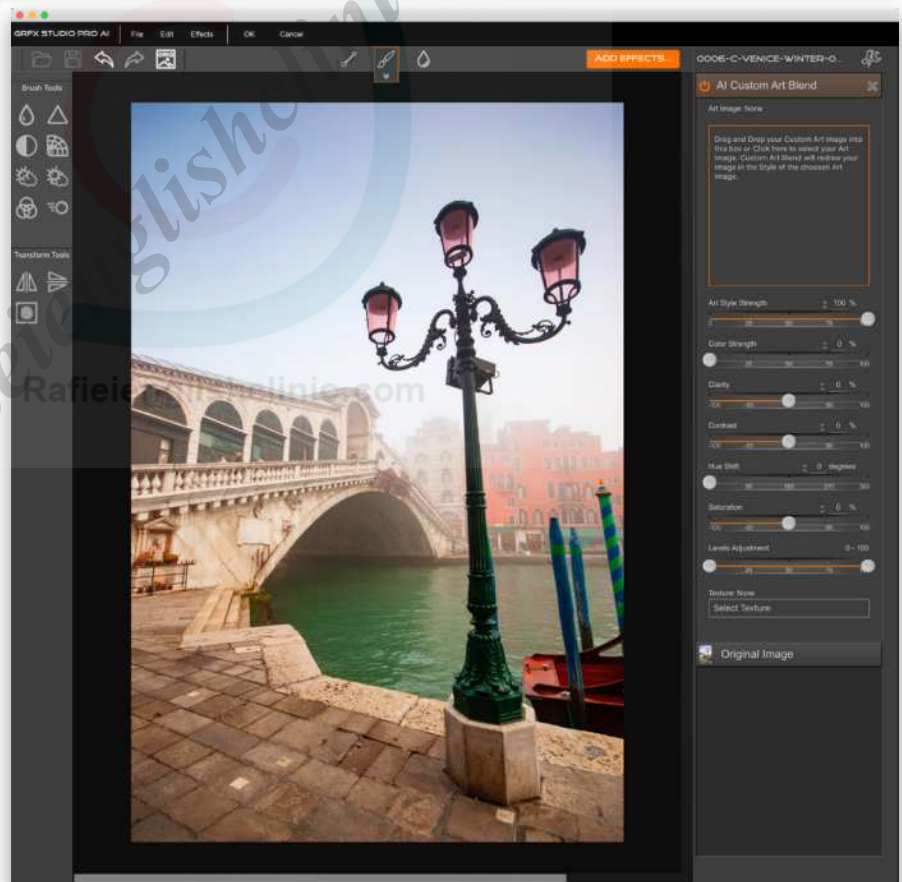


ART FX

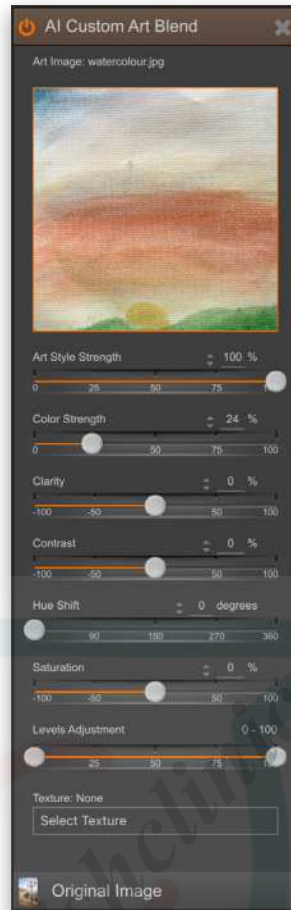
GRFX Studio Pro AI's Art FX allows for quick renditions of your photo in charcoal, pastels, or watercolors, among others. The big addition in this version is IntelliArt FX. This effect allows you to emulate any art style. If you'd like to make your work look like the style and palette of Rembrandt or Dali, you could potentially use an image from the Internet as the basis for the style. For copyright reasons, we're going to try it with basic home art—literally, a beginner watercolor.

Note: IntelliArt FX is so-called for more than just the AI aspect. Auto FX had a presence at CES 2019 (as 2020 was online) on the Intel stand. They garnered a lot of interest for the program in the booth, and Intel was included in the name in honor of that.

STEP ONE: Using the effect is easy. Open the Art FX tab in the Select Effect dialog, and IntelliArt FX is selected by default. Click Apply Effect to add the effect.

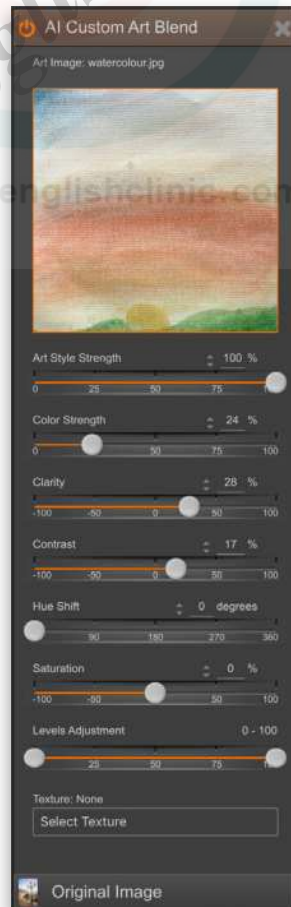


STEP TWO: The big thing that you'll notice in the panel on the right is the large box for the art image. Drag your reference image onto the box. Alternatively, you can click the box to open the file browser and navigate to the file.



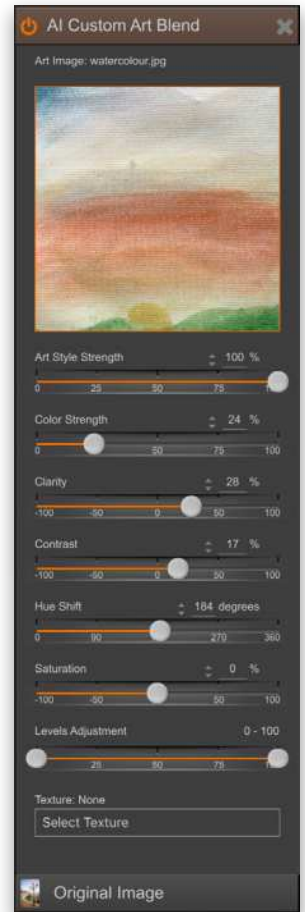
STEP THREE: The AI will work its magic and render the art look from your file. You can see here that even the texture of the paper has been included in the creation of the look.

As this is meant to be a painting, you might want more color, so increase Color Strength to aid this. This image looks nice at 24%.

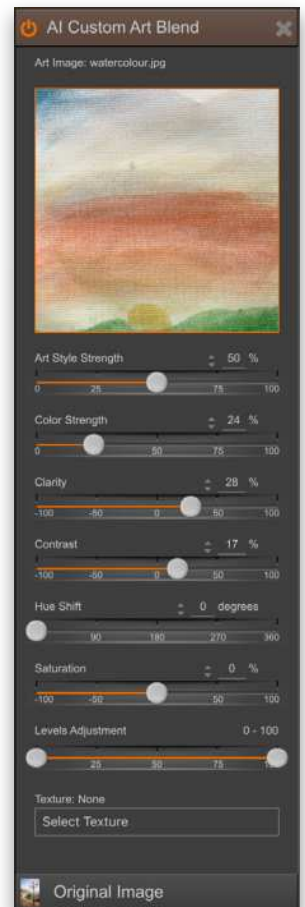


STEP FOUR: For definition, push Clarity to 28% and Contrast to 17%.

STEP FIVE: If you want to completely change the color tone, grab the Hue Shift slider to go for a radically different look. Here's an example with Hue Shift at 184°.

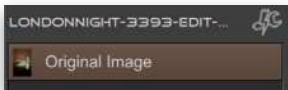


STEP SIX: The image looks great, but the overall effect is too strong, especially with the texture. Use the Art Style Strength to fade your look. Here's how it looks at 50% in our image (with the Hue Shift set back to 0°).



QUICK FIXES

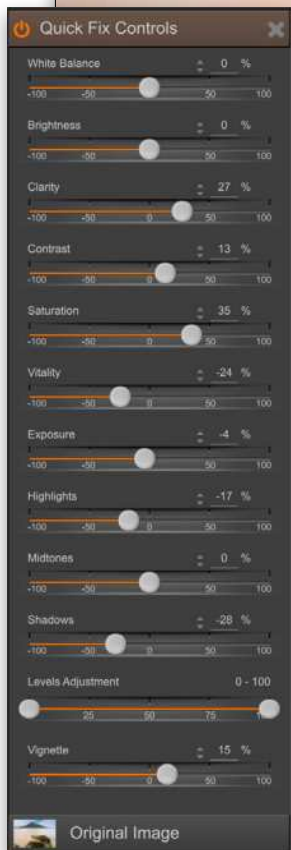
While you'll probably do most of the file fixing before using a plug-in, it would be remiss not to mention that GRFX Studio Pro AI does have its own version of the Basic panel. You can find it in the Photo FX tab in the Select Effect dialog: Choose Pro FX on the left and you'll see the Quick Fix Controls option. But there's a faster way to get to it. You've probably noticed the wrench with a lightning bolt beside the filename in the FX Palette. Click this to open the Quick Fix Controls.



Click this to open the Quick Fix Controls.

The majority of the controls are immediately obvious as they correlate with Lightroom and Camera Raw. Vitality as a negative percent works well mixed with Saturation; in the positive it can add too much color.

The Levels Adjustment tool works by giving you a slider that sets the black and white points. (It's easier to use with a histogram, though, as you can see where the current points are.) Move the ends of the sliders inward to control where the points are.



RECEPTION

As part of writing this, I spoke to the Auto FX team, and they're very excited about this update. It's not a set-and-forget update either: They have a lot of plans for new features that are in ongoing development. They're also very receptive to requests. I've suggested more shortcut keys for brushes and the like. The Quick Fix shortcut is actually the result of user requests, so *you* can influence what happens in the app itself.

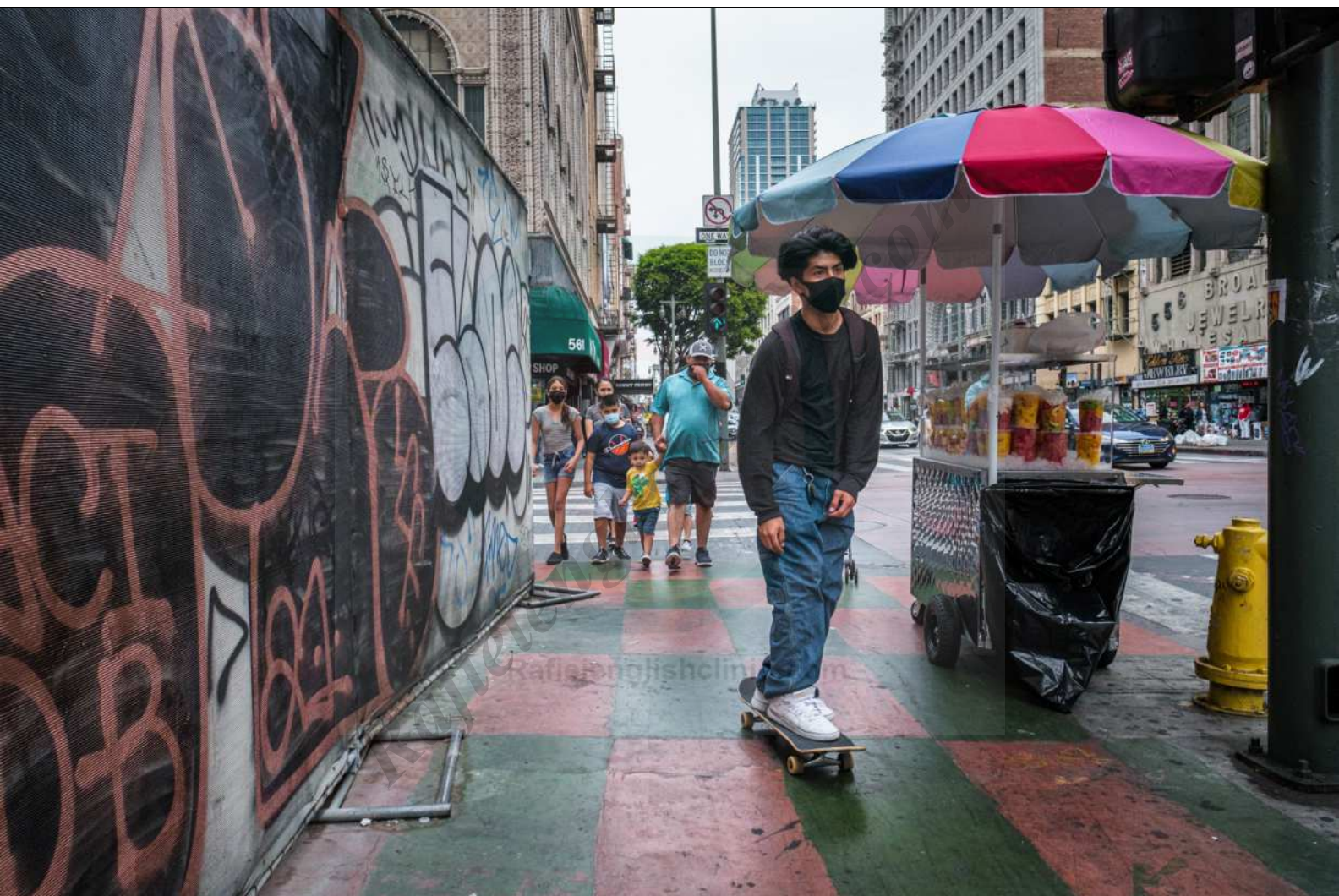
We've only just touched on the amount of effects available in the app here and in the previous *Lightroom Magazine* article; there are plenty more. Overall, GRFX Studio Pro AI has a neat bank of tools to enhance your photos. ■

Questions & Comments



TEACHING & SEEING

There came a time in my photography when I didn't think about what I was doing. The process became intuitive and spontaneous. The division between the moment and my making the photograph became so abbreviated that the entire experience was as natural and invisible as breathing.



It wasn't until I began sharing my approach with others that I considered how and why I did things. I had to find words that clearly conveyed how I saw moments that played out in front of me and how that informed what I did with a camera. Seeing and making photographs had become an innate experience for me. Teaching others that same process was a challenge of its own.

If all that was required were teaching the fundamentals of ISO, shutter speed, and aperture, the process would be relatively simple. When asked how I effectively translated the chaotic world around me into a small

rectangular frame, it wasn't so easy. I had to consider my method for taking innumerable unrelated elements and contextualizing them into a compelling photograph. It's a lot easier to do than to explain what happens in the deep recesses of my mind.

Nevertheless, I made my best effort, especially when out on the street leading a photography workshop. It's there where I shared my process out loud while practicing. I not only brought attention to a scene that drew my attention, but I explained why its lines, shapes, color, and lighting offered me the potential for something interesting.

ALL IMAGES BY IBARIONEX PERELLO

Even without bringing the camera to my eye, I guided participants to evaluate a raw scene and gauge its potential for a photograph. By taking the reins of their seeing, I directed them to consider the contrast of light and shadow, or the way lines and shapes played off each other. I emphasized the visual elements to pay attention to and which to ignore.

LINES, SHAPES, COLORS, LIGHTING, & WAITING

On this particular day, I stopped the group as we walked down Broadway in Downtown Los Angeles. I pointed out the various elements that were in front of us. To our left was a graffiti-covered fence that secured a construction site. To the right was a rainbow-colored umbrella, a part of a food cart selling freshly cut fruit. There was also a yellow fire hydrant, and a sidewalk made up of two-color rectangles.

Lines and shapes were also in abundance, including the triangular pattern created by each color of the umbrella and the strong graphic lines of the surrounding street and architecture. Even the security fence provided an implied diagonal line that led the eye toward the center of the frame.

These visual elements provided an ideal setting for a photograph. Though a moment had yet to present itself, I recognized that the scene possessed the elements for a good composition. I raised the camera to my eye and explained how and why I composed the scene, paying particular attention to the edges of the frame. I made conscious choices of what I wanted to include and exclude from the frame.

After doing this, I pointed out the family about to cross the street. As they were likely coming in our direction, I wanted to use them as subject matter for the image. They were close to each other, and the father holding his young son's hand would provide a storytelling gesture. I just had to wait for the light to change and for the family to cross the street.

As they reached the curb, a skateboarder turned the corner, past the family and toward us. With only seconds to react, I made a series of images in quick succession of him entering and leaving the frame. Though unexpected, he provided a wonderful element that made the resulting photograph better than I'd imagined. It served as a perfect example of how I work and how it prepares me for the beautifully unexpected.

I still recognized that the raw file didn't do the scene justice, though. The overcast lighting resulted in dull illumination that reduced contrast and color saturation.



Original image

The featureless sky was also an issue, as it could result in a blown-out highlight if I weren't careful with exposure. The exposure compensation I'd applied underexposed the image, which would need to be corrected in Adobe Lightroom Classic. (KelbyOne members can [click here](#) to download a smaller DNG version of this image for practice purposes only.)

STEP ONE: In Lightroom Classic's Basic panel, adjust the Exposure slider to +0.80. This increases the overall exposure a little more than 2/3 of a stop.





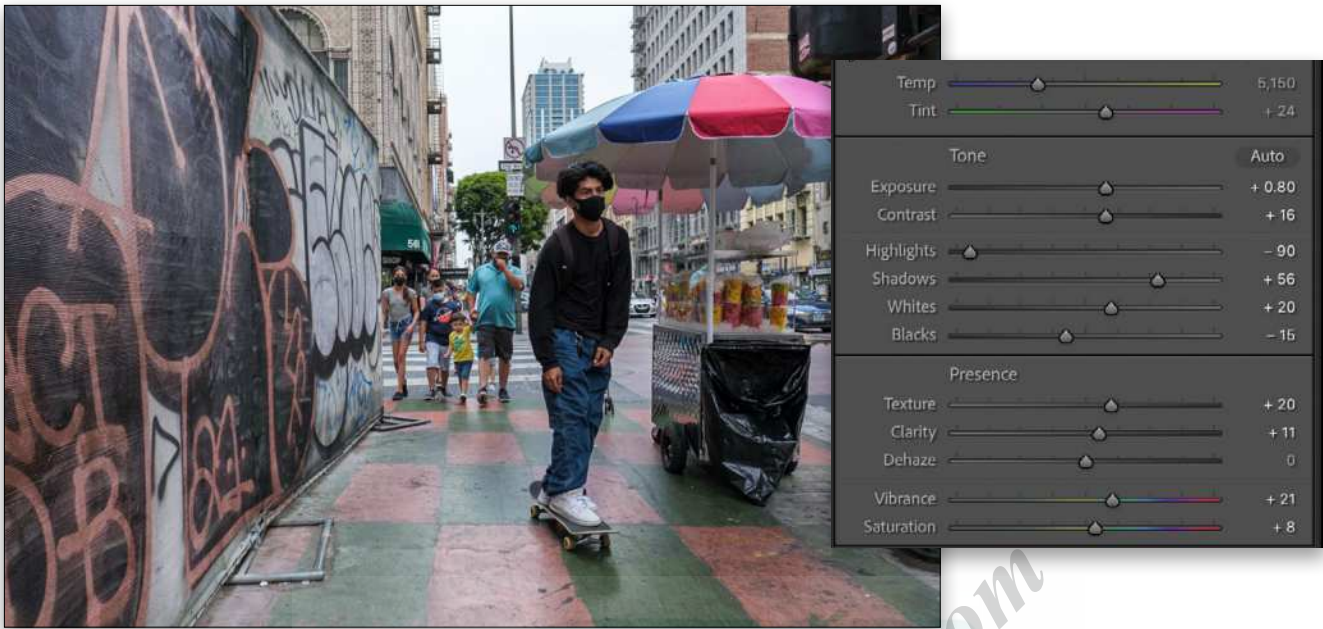
Basic	
Treatment:	Color Black & White
Profile:	Camera Pro Neg Std
WB:	As Shot
Temp	5,150
Tint	+24
Tone:	Auto
Exposure	+0.80
Contrast	0
Highlights	-90
Shadows	+56
Whites	0
Blacks	0
Presence	

STEP TWO: To reduce the brightness and the overcast sky and to open up the darker shadows in the photograph, adjust Highlights to -90 and Shadows to +56, respectively. This protects essential highlight values and reveals shadow detail. It also flattens the image but that can be quickly addressed by controlling contrast.



Basic	
Treatment:	Color Black & White
Profile:	Camera Pro Neg Std
WB:	As Shot
Temp	5,150
Tint	+24
Tone:	Auto
Exposure	+0.80
Contrast	+16
Highlights	-90
Shadows	+56
Whites	+20
Blacks	-15
Presence	

STEP THREE: Increase contrast by adjusting Contrast to +16, Whites to +20, and Blacks to -15. This is already a significant improvement from where we started, but the results are still lackluster; however, there's still more we can do in the Basic panel.



STEP FOUR: The controls in the Presence area of the Basic panel provide tools for increasing microcontrast and boosting the appearance of colors. Adjust Texture to +20, Clarity to +11, Vibrance to +21, and Saturation to +8. The results are a pleasing pop to the image that appears natural rather than overly processed.



STEP FIVE: While the overcast lighting made for an exposure that provided a wide dynamic range with good shadow and highlight detail, it also delivers an image that feels dull, even with the adjustments that we've already made. The Tone Curve panel provides the means to increase contrast, but in a much more controlled and refined way. For this image, use the Parametric Curve option and adjust Highlights to +11, Lights to +14, Darks to -1, and Shadows to -8.



HSL/Color

	Hue	Saturation	Luminance	All
Hue				
Red				0
Orange				0
Yellow				-31
Green				0
Aqua				0
Blue				-5
Purple				0
Magenta				0
Saturation				
Red				+4
Orange				+3
Yellow				+10
Green				+10
Aqua				+24
Blue				-17
Purple				-9
Magenta				+20
Luminance				
Red				-27
Orange				+7
Yellow				+6
Green				-9
Aqua				-8
Blue				+6
Purple				-16
Magenta				-8

STEP SIX: Colors are an important aspect of this image and, while the Vibrance and Saturation sliders in the Basic panel boosted all the colors, we want to be more selective in this phase. In the HSL/Color panel, we'll make changes to specific color values using the color sliders in Hue, Saturation, and Luminance. Depending on the color selected, you'll see small significant changes to some aspects in the scene, such as the fire hydrant, the skater's skin tone, and certain colors in the umbrella.

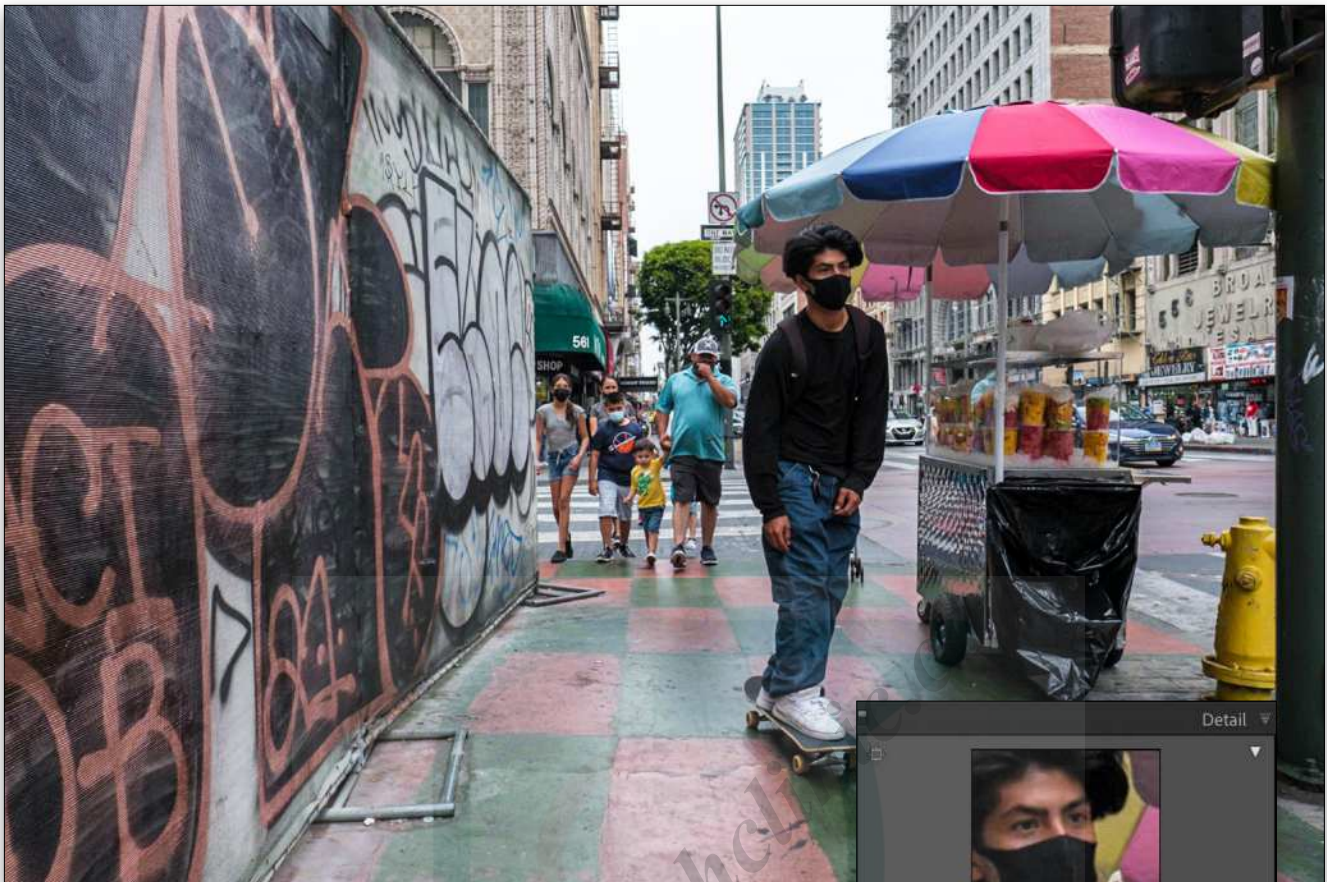
Click the All tab at the top right of the HSL/Color panel to expand all three sections of the panel. In the Hue section, set Yellow to -31 and Blue to -5. In the Saturation section, set Red to +4, Orange to +3, Yellow to +10, Green to +10, Aqua to +24, Blue to -17, Purple to -9, and Magenta to +20.



HSL/Color

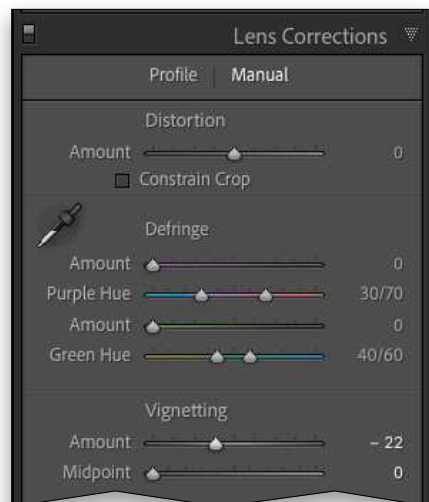
Aqua				0
Blue				-5
Purple				0
Magenta				0
Saturation				
Red				+4
Orange				+3
Yellow				+10
Green				+10
Aqua				+24
Blue				-17
Purple				-9
Magenta				+20
Luminance				
Red				-27
Orange				+7
Yellow				+6
Green				-9
Aqua				-8
Blue				+6
Purple				-16
Magenta				-8

STEP SEVEN: Still in the HSL/Color panel, go to the Luminance controls. Adjust Red to -27, Orange to +7, Yellow to +6, Green to -9, Aqua to -8, Blue to +6, Purple to -16, and Magenta to -8.



STEP EIGHT: This image was shot at an ISO of 1600 to leverage both a fast shutter speed and a moderate aperture, so it possesses a modest amount of noise and could do with some slight sharpening. In the Detail panel, set Sharpening to +40, Radius to 1, Detail to 0, and Masking to 70. In the Noise Reduction section, set the Luminance amount to 8.

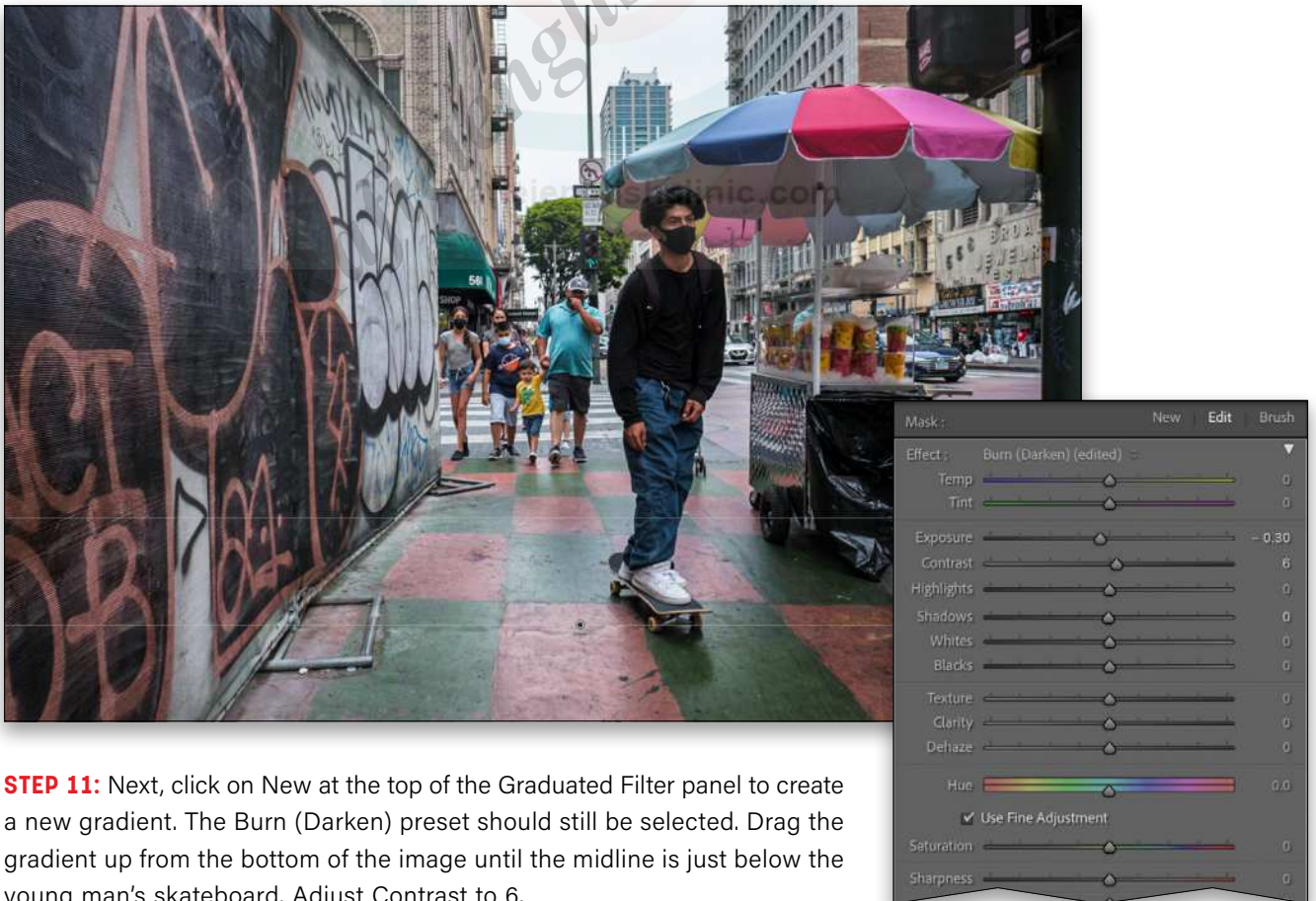
STEP NINE: To emphasize the central part of the image, use the Vignetting control within the Manual tab of the Lens Corrections panel. Set the Amount to -22 and the Midpoint to 0.



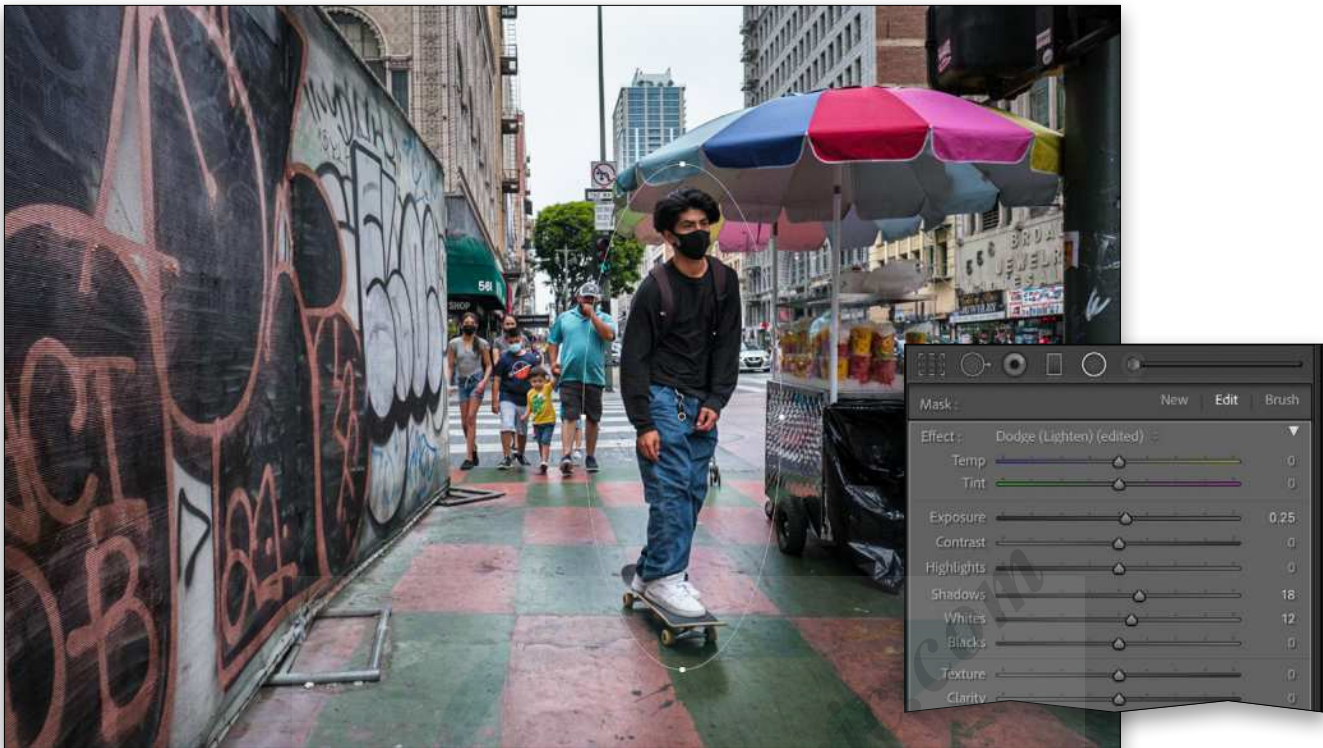
“ Even without bringing the camera to my eye, I guided participants to evaluate a raw scene and gauge its potential for a photograph. By taking the reins of their seeing, I directed them to consider the contrast of light and shadow, or the way lines and shapes played off each other. I emphasized the visual elements to pay attention to and which to ignore.”




STEP 10: The top and bottom 1/8 of the image are brighter than necessary. To selectively darken both areas, use the Graduated Filter tool (M) to reduce the exposure. Select the Burn (Darken) preset in the drop-down menu at the top of the panel, and then create the first gradient beginning from the top of the frame until the midline is just above the ONE WAY sign in the background. Adjust both the Highlights and Whites to -6.



STEP 11: Next, click on New at the top of the Graduated Filter panel to create a new gradient. The Burn (Darken) preset should still be selected. Drag the gradient up from the bottom of the image until the midline is just below the young man's skateboard. Adjust Contrast to 6.

 Questions & Comments


STEP 12: To enhance the presence of the skateboarder, use the Radial Filter (Shift-M) to create an oval around his body. Select the Dodge (Lighten) preset, and adjust the Shadows to 18 and Whites to 12 to finish the image of a skateboarder cruising down a city street. ■ 



Final image



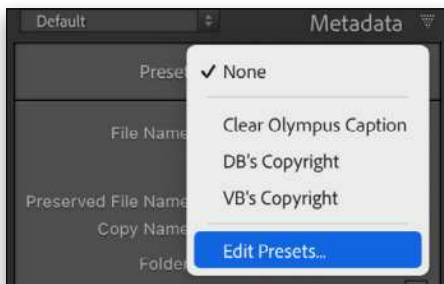
Q. Sometimes when I'm working through a series of images shot with the same camera, my camera profiles disappear from the Profile pop-up and I'm left with only Color and Monochrome. Why is this?

A. If some of the profiles seem to disappear, double-check the file format of the photo you're viewing. You may have accidentally switched the camera to JPEG, or you may have been using an in-camera setting such as HDR or Panorama that automatically saves as a JPEG, or perhaps it's a photo that you sent to Photoshop and returned as a PSD or TIFF file. The Adobe Raw and Camera Matching profiles only apply to RAW photos, so they're not available for other file formats.

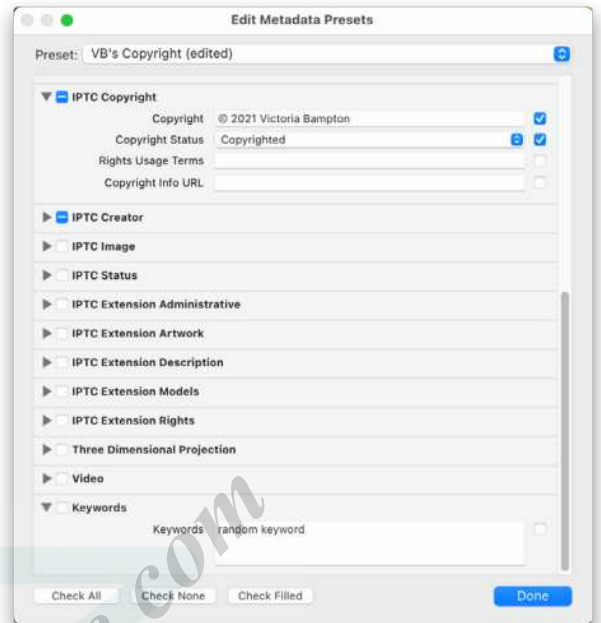
Q. Every time I import new photos, Lightroom adds the same keywords, but the Keywords field in the Import dialog is empty. How do I stop it?

A. There are a few ways that keywords can be added during import. The most obvious one, which you've already ruled out, is the Keywords field in the Import dialog. Also, photos that have previously been edited in other software may have keywords stored in their metadata, which are added to Lightroom when you import.

Since you mention that these are new photos, however, I think you're applying a metadata preset that has accidentally been saved with one or more keywords. Go to the Metadata panel in the Library module and in the Preset pop-up at the top, select Edit Presets. In the Edit Metadata Presets dialog,



select your usual import preset at the top and then scroll all the way down to the Keywords field at



the bottom. Simply uncheck that Keywords box to exclude the keywords from the preset, click Done, and then select Save. The next time you import new photos with that preset, no new keywords will be applied.

Q. In the Develop mode, there's a button at the lower right that says Sync, but sometimes it changes to Previous. Why does it change, and what's the difference?

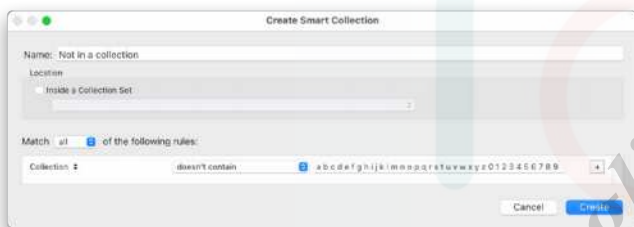
A. Sync and Previous are both ways of copying settings from one photo to other photos. For example, if you shoot a series of photos in similar light, you may want to edit one photo and then copy the settings to all of the other photos. The button changes depending on how many photos are selected.

When a single photo is selected in the Filmstrip, the button says Previous, and clicking it copies all of the Develop settings from the last photo you edited onto the current photo.

When more than one photo is selected, the button changes to Sync, which brings up the Synchronize Settings dialog asking you which settings you want to copy from the current photo. When you click Synchronize, it pastes those settings onto all the other selected photos.

Q. I'm trying to organize my photos into collections, but how do I find the photos that aren't in a collection yet?

- A.** There are a few ways of doing this, but the simplest is probably to use a smart collection. To do so, go to the Collections panel, click on the + button at the top right, and select Create Smart Collection. Give the collection a name such as "Not in a collection" and in the first drop-down menu on the left in the Match section, select Source>Collection, and set the second drop-down menu to doesn't contain. In the text field, type the whole alphabet and all of the numbers with a space between each letter and number (e.g., a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9) to include all of the possible collection names. When you click Create, the Grid view updates to show all of the photos that aren't in a collection.



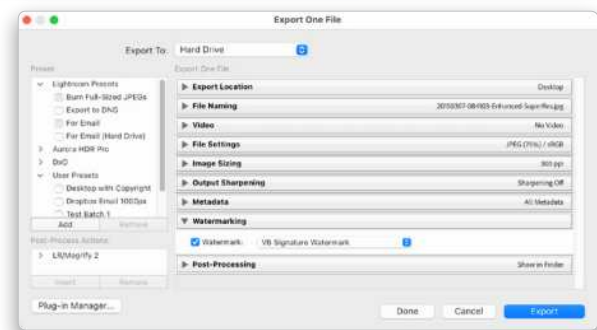
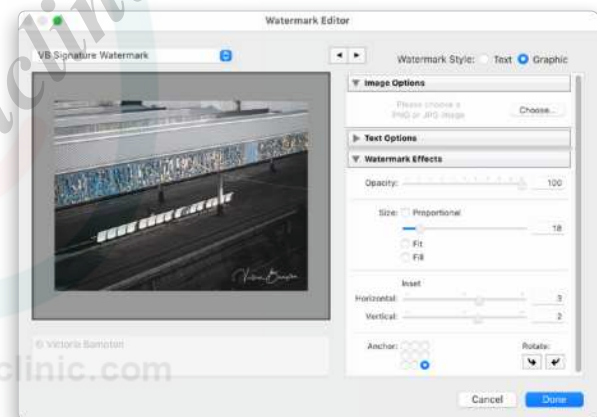
Q. I have a brand-new logo and I want to put it in the corner of my photos when I export them. How do I do that?

- A.** Adding your logo or signature to your photos can be useful, especially when posting your photos online. Lightroom allows you to do this using the Watermark tool. You'll need to have your logo saved as a PNG format with transparency. Don't forget to store it somewhere safe, because the watermark preset only saves a note of where your logo is stored on your hard drive, and if you move the logo file, the watermark will no longer work.

To start designing your watermark, go to Lightroom Classic (PC: Edit)>Edit Watermarks. This gives you a choice of either a text or a graphic watermark. If you just wanted your business name or signature, you could select Text and type your chosen text in the lower-left corner, and then select the font style and perhaps add a drop shadow.

Because you mentioned a logo, we'll use the graphical watermark option instead. In the Image Options section, click the Choose button and navigate to your watermark. The logo appears on the image preview, and then you can use the settings in the Watermark Effects section to decide how to position the watermark on the photo. There are a few settings to adjust, including the position (Anchor), the distance from the anchor (the Horizontal and Vertical sliders in the Inset section), the Size of the watermark, and its Opacity.

Once you're satisfied with your watermark design, click the Save button, give your preset a name, and click Create. When you next export your photos, check the Watermark box in the Watermarking section of the Export dialog and select your new watermark preset to apply it to the exported photos. ■



Questions & Comments

If you have a Lightroom question that you'd like Victoria Bampton to answer in the pages of *Photoshop User* magazine, send it to letters@photoshouser.com.

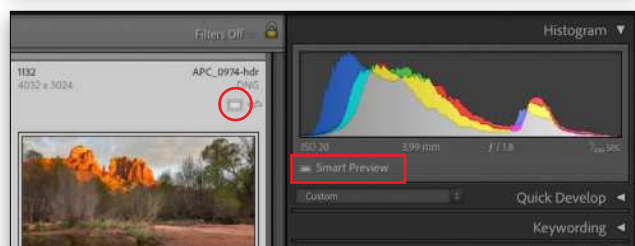
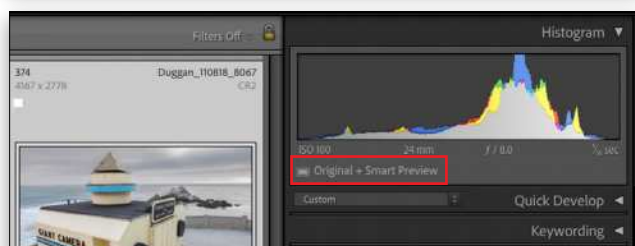
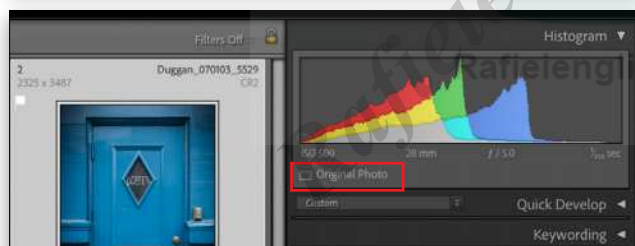
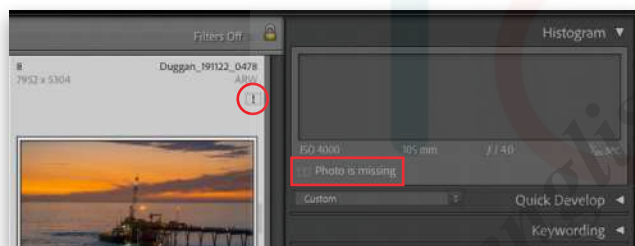


At the end of this column in last month's issue (June 2021), I showed how you can display a collection for all the missing photos in your Lightroom Classic catalog (Library>Find All Missing Photos). This month I want to continue with that general topic and share some tips for locating missing photos.

The main reasons that files show up as missing in Lightroom Classic generally fall into three categories: the files, or the folder that contains them, have been either moved, renamed, or deleted, and these changes were not made from within Lightroom Classic.

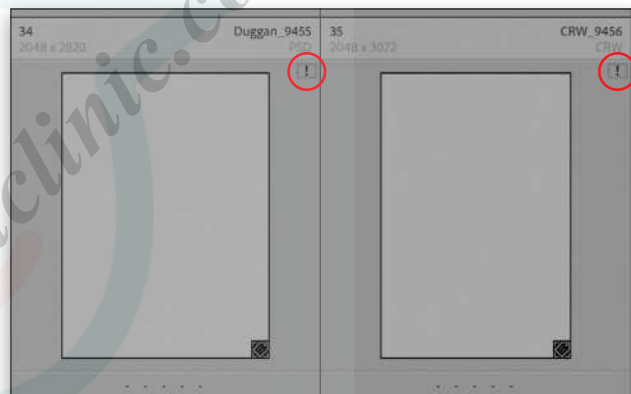
MISSING PHOTO STATUS INDICATORS

When a photo is missing, it displays an exclamation mark badge in the upper-right corner of the thumbnail. In either the Library or the Develop modules, you'll also see a status indicator under the Histogram that displays one of the following: Photo is missing, Original Photo, Original + Smart Preview, or Smart Preview.



If a photo is missing but there's a smart preview for it, the thumbnail will also display a smart preview badge in the upper-right corner.

Some missing photos may not even display a thumbnail or preview image. This is more common if at some point in the past you've deleted the preview cache file and Lightroom Classic couldn't regenerate new thumbnails or preview images because the original files couldn't be found.

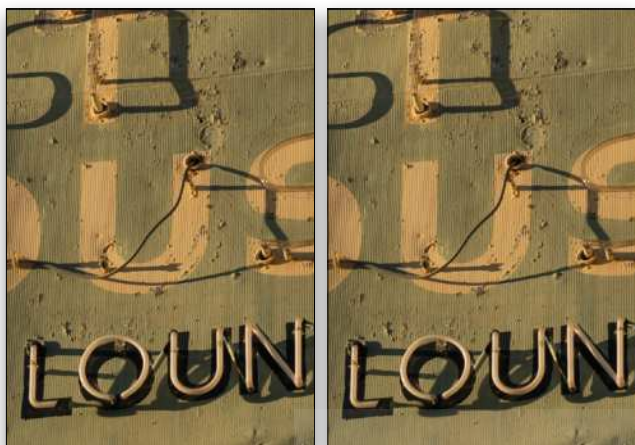


MISSING PHOTOS WITH SMART PREVIEWS

If a missing photo has a smart preview, it's not totally lost. Lightroom Classic may not be able to find the original file, but there's still a lot that you can do with it. You can apply Develop adjustments to the image, assign keywords, add the image to different collections, as well as export copies of the photo. If the resize option in the Export dialog is turned off, then the exported image will be a maximum of 2,560 pixels on the long edge.

If you choose to resize the image to a larger size in the Export dialog, Lightroom Classic will interpolate the data from the maximum 2,560-pixel smart preview size. The quality of this interpolation will depend on the quality of the original image, as well as how much enlargement is being applied. If you're not enlarging the file too much, this can still yield a good quality image for small- to medium-sized prints. If you're trying to export a smart preview to the same size as an original file from a high-megapixel camera, the rendition of fine details will not be as sharp as they'd be if the original

source file was being used, as can be seen in the comparison below.



Original RAW file; long edge: 7,952 pixels; detail view at 200%

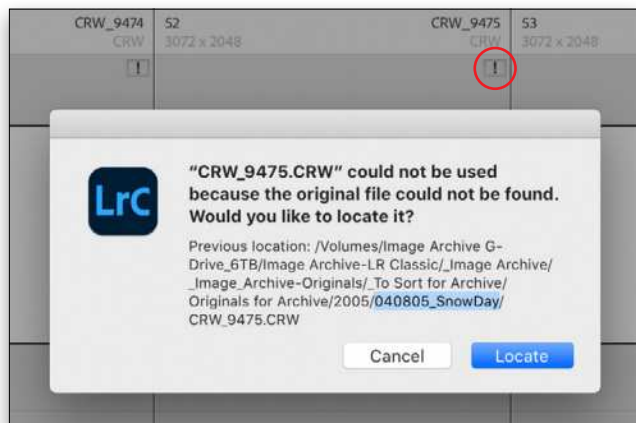
Smart preview; long edge: 2,560 pixels exported to 7,952 pixels wide; detail view at 200%

TRACKING DOWN MISSING PHOTOS

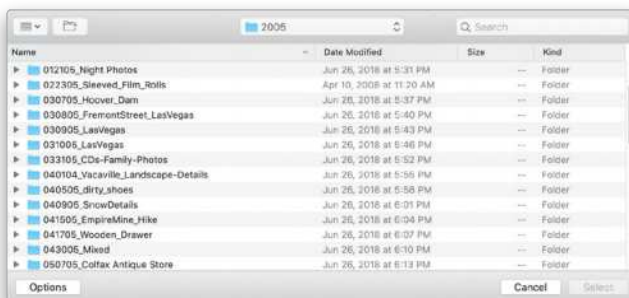
Lightroom Classic can't find missing photos for you, but it can provide you with some useful information that can help you track them down.

OPTION ONE: FIND THE LAST KNOWN LOCATION

The first step is to click the exclamation mark badge on the image thumbnail. This will display the previous location for the photo according to the Lightroom Classic catalog. Once you've identified the last known location of the file, see if that's a hard drive that's not currently plugged in to your computer, or turned on. If so, then that might solve your problem, assuming you still have the hard drive, that is. The directory path of the last known location is an important clue. In the image here, I've highlighted the text of the folder name, "040805_SnowDay," and copied it so I can paste it into the search feature of my operating system.



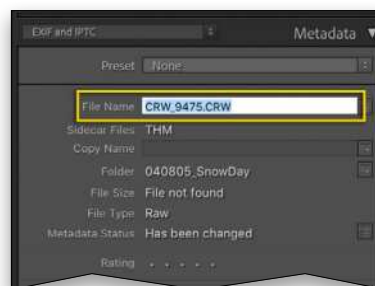
If you click Locate, it will open a window showing the previous location or, if that's not available, it will show the parent folder of the last known location, which is what we see in the example here.



The actual folder wasn't present in this folder, and it also showed as missing in the Lightroom Classic Folders panel. But the folder name that was revealed by the last known location allowed me to find the folder by doing a simple search using my computer's operating system. (For more on finding and relinking missing folders, see this column in the [March 2021 issue](#).)

OPTION TWO: SEARCH FOR THE FILENAME

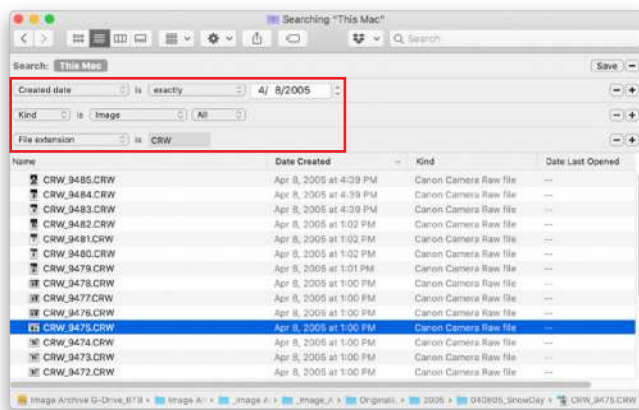
If you're unable to find the last known folder location, try searching for the filename. You can easily copy the filename from the Metadata panel in Lightroom Classic, and then paste it into a Search field by either accessing it through the operating system, or by using the Search field in the Locate File window that appears when you click the missing file exclamation mark on a thumbnail, and then click Locate.



If you don't rename your files as they're imported into Lightroom Classic, it's possible that a search for a camera-generated filename may turn up other images with the same filename (the numeric identifier in camera filenames typically resets after 9,999 images). In this case, you must be sure you're choosing the right file. Viewing small thumbnails of the images in the Search window can help you decide which is the correct file. The possibility of duplicate filenames is one reason why renaming your files with a unique name is a good idea. I use a filename format that includes my last name, a 6-digit representation of the date, and the original camera number for the file. So, the file in this example, CRW_9475.crw, would be renamed "Duggan_050408_9475.crw." Since the date the image was made is part of the name, it will never be duplicated.

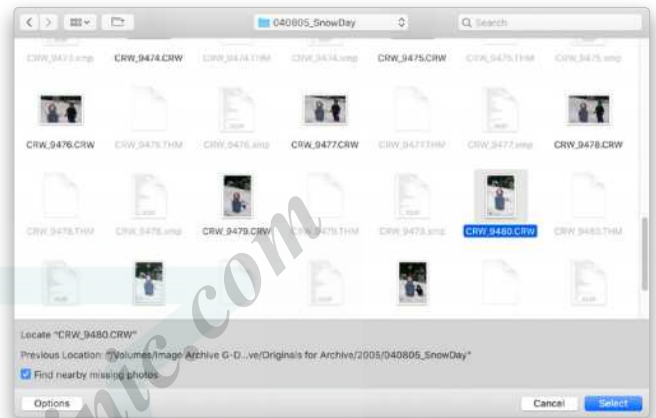
OPTION THREE: SEARCH FOR THE FILE CREATION DATE

If you're unable to locate the file by searching for the filename, it's possible that the file has been renamed and the new name doesn't contain any elements of the previous name. In this case, the next thing to try is searching for the date the photo was taken. This is something that doesn't change and is fortunately part of the EXIF data that's recorded by the camera. You need to make a search based on a file's creation date using the Find or Search feature in your computer's operating system. Use the Metadata panel in Lightroom Classic to locate the entry for Capture Date, then open the Find or Search window on your computer, and do a search for image files that were created on that date. You can narrow the field by also entering the file format extension. If you're able to locate the image this way, make a note of its current folder location and then return to Lightroom Classic.



RELINKING FOUND IMAGES

After you've located the missing image using one of the methods above, click on its exclamation mark badge on the thumbnail and then use the Locate file dialog to navigate to where the file is. Click Select to update the file's location in the catalog. If there are nearby missing files in the same folder, they'll also be relinked to the catalog (the Options button will display this, as well as the previous location folder path).



WORKFLOW TIPS TO PREVENT MISSING FILES

The best way to deal with missing files is to adopt consistent file management and workflow practices to prevent them from becoming lost. Here are some of the ways to do this:

Create a well-organized folder structure for your image archive. Use a main top-level folder for all your image files and use a logical organization of subfolders within it.

- Become very familiar with your image archive folder structure. Be able to draw a rough diagram of it even if you're not at your computer. Knowing it well will help you manage it effectively.
- Use a consistent file- and folder-naming scheme.
- As mentioned earlier, consider renaming files so that filenames will never be duplicated.
- If files or folders do need to be renamed, do so within the Lightroom Classic program.
- The same approach should be used if files or folders must be moved. ■

Questions & Comments

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PHOTO TO BRUSHSTROKES: HOW ANYONE CAN PAINT

I often explain the irony that I was drawn to photography because I couldn't paint or draw, but I now oversee product management for Adobe's focused drawing and painting application, Adobe Fresco. It isn't like I don't understand the workflow or the users; after all, my career did begin with product management on Photoshop, and painting is one of its many popular use cases. I went deep on photography, though, and the best way to produce a decent painting is a lot of practice so, knowledge and understanding aside, I've "failed to develop as a painter." With my own limitations in mind and knowing that everyone has a camera in their pocket, I thought I'd show you two really powerful ways to turn a photo into a painting.

PAINTCAN

Let's start with an app that you've almost certainly never heard of: **Adobe PaintCan**. This app was built with this very problem in mind! It's an Adobe Labs app (think Adobe Sneaks technology that you can use today, but hasn't been formally productized), which is free and runs on iOS. There are a lot of options and a tremendous amount of power. I'll walk you through the steps that work best for me.

STEP ONE: Tap the icon in the upper left to choose a photo. Any good painting requires a good composition, so choose a photo that you like the framing of, and that has good color separation (lest the strokes blend together).

STEP TWO: The interface essentially works using the tools at the bottom from left to right, starting with your image zoomed out and then zoomed in for the latter tools. Tap the Splat tool at the bottom left, and simply tap the screen in various places until you have a base of broad color strokes (don't worry, the tools are designed to bring back detail as you go). If you want to emphasize a particular area, keep tapping it until the color is to your liking.



STEP THREE: Continuing with the image zoomed out to fit the screen, use the Light Fill tool to tap



Before Splatter



After Splatter

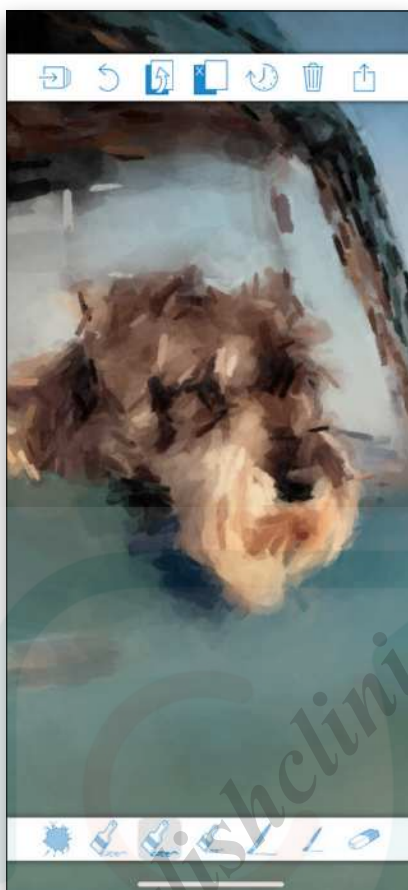
across the broad splashes you just created. Now your image is starting to come through. If you want rough edges, you could explicitly *not* tap on certain pieces.



STEP FOUR: Now we'll use the Heavy Fill tool, only this time we'll zoom in a bit and tap individual pieces, moving across, then down, then across, adding detail with each tap (use two fingers to pan around the zoomed-in image). The closer in you zoom, the more



Light Fill result



Heavy Fill result

detail when you tap; the further back, the less. When you've gone over your whole image, it's time to survey your work from afar. I like to make some areas appear less detailed, so at this point I'll zoom out and retap areas I want to soften. I use these less detailed strokes just like areas of soft focus in a photo, to redirect the eye toward important pieces.



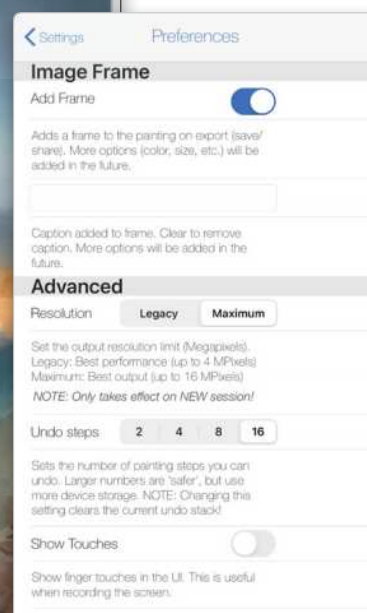
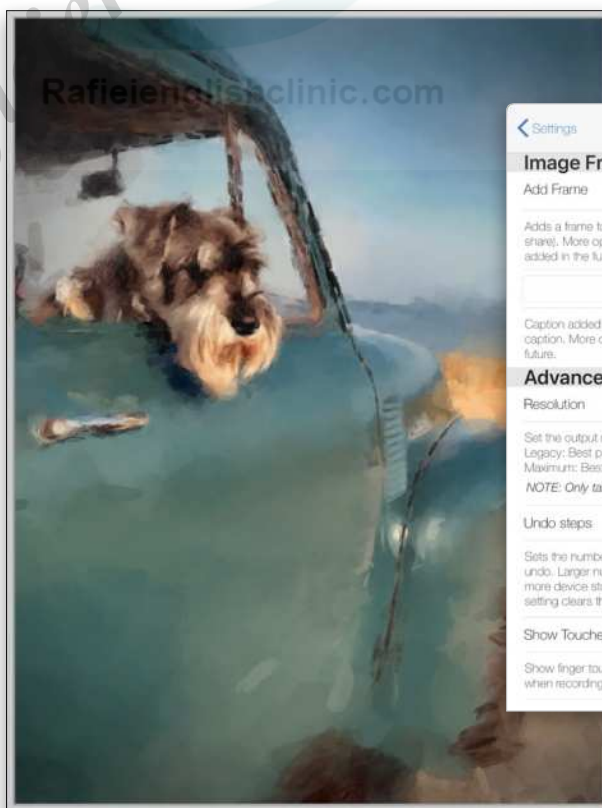
STEP FIVE: My final tool is Small Fill. Here I'll only zoom into key areas of detail, such as the dog, the vents, the door handle, etc.; things I want to emphasize or clarify in my painting. This should be done with dozens of taps, zoomed in very, very closely. Once I'm finished with this, I'll zoom back and survey my finished work. It isn't uncommon for me to choose

the Heavy Fill tool one last time and soften the background, edges, or corners. This is "season-to-taste," so do whatever looks good to you. This is probably a good time to remind you that there's an Undo button at the upper left.



I don't use the Thick Lines, Thin Lines, or Eraser tools, but that isn't to say you shouldn't. Experiment and have fun; there's no mess and no cost! Unlike painting, you can undo and erase! Here's my finished work.

Before we leave PaintCan, let me direct you to the preferences. When you tap the icon at the top left to add an image, tap Settings, and then tap Preferences. There are some great controls here, from frames to captions to resolution—even undo options! I hope you enjoy this app as much as I do. If this is something you'd like to see in Fresco, drop me a line at bhughes@adobe.com and let me know!



FRESCO

Okay, speaking of Fresco, I want to show you how to take your newfound PaintCan skills to the next level.

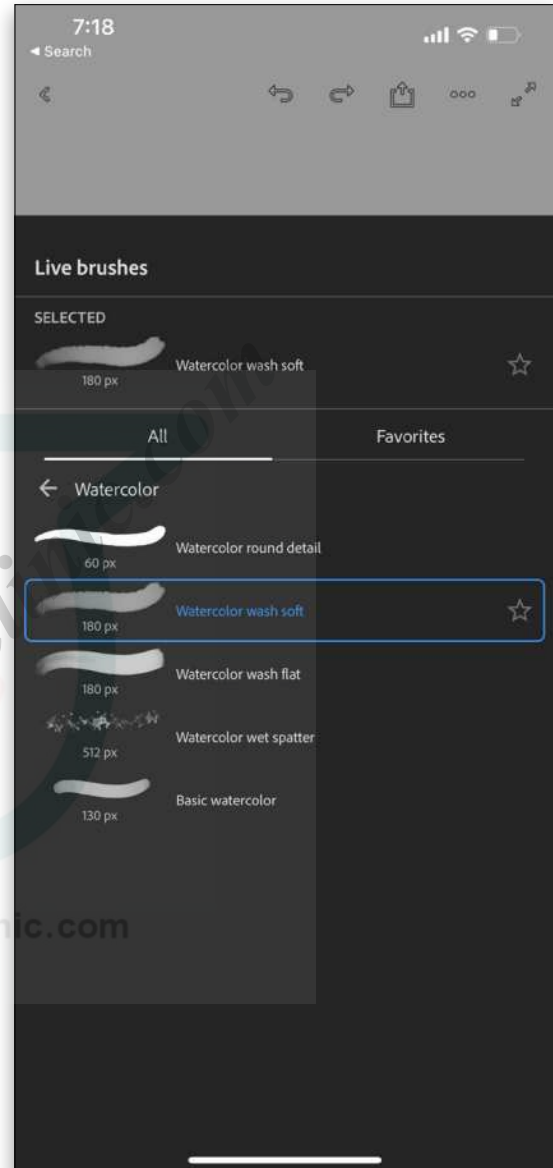
STEP ONE: Launch Adobe Fresco on iPhone, iPad, or Windows and open a photo you like with the same guidance as before: a good composition and plenty of color separation.

STEP TWO: Start a new blank document, and tap the Photo Picker (image icon) near the bottom of the toolbar on the left to place the image of your choice. With the image layer selected, choose Convert to Pixel Layer from the options at the base of the screen.



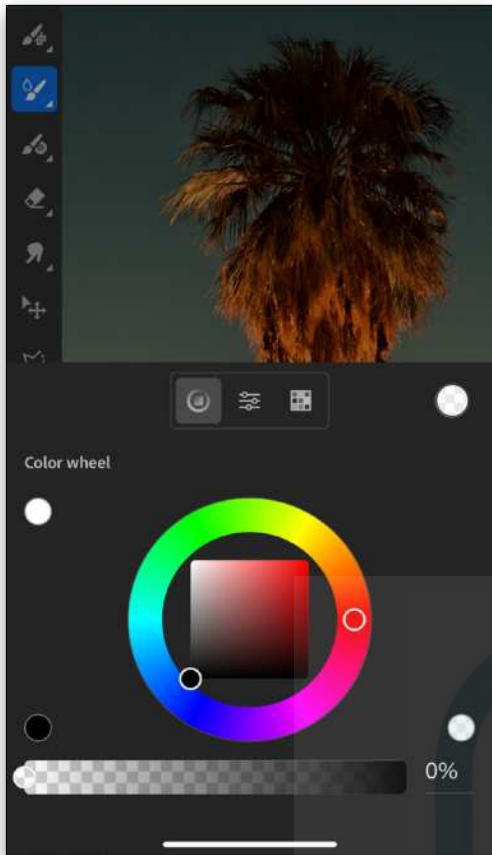
STEP THREE: Now it's time to choose a brush and remove the paint so that we can paint with the pixels in the photo! Fresco is known for its brushes: Photoshop brushes (pixel brushes), Vector brushes (infinitely scalable strokes), and the ones we'll use for this exercise, Live Brushes (beautiful Oil and Watercolor simulation, unique to Fresco).

Let's choose a Watercolor brush, so tap-and-hold on the Live Brush icon (the second brush down on the left in the toolbar), tap Watercolor, choose your brush, and then tap above the Live Brushes options to close it.



STEP FOUR: Just below the toolbar on the left, tap the Live Brush icon to go to the brush controls. Here we'll remove all color from our brush and adjust brush Size and Water Flow (see next page).

STEP FIVE: Now, simply make strokes over the image and watch the pixels magically bleed like watercolors. You can experiment with brush dynamics (size, flow, wetness, etc.) to achieve your desired effect. Try different brushes, including the Oil paint brushes! Try mixing paint strokes with areas untouched (original photo). Check out the next page for my final watercolor.

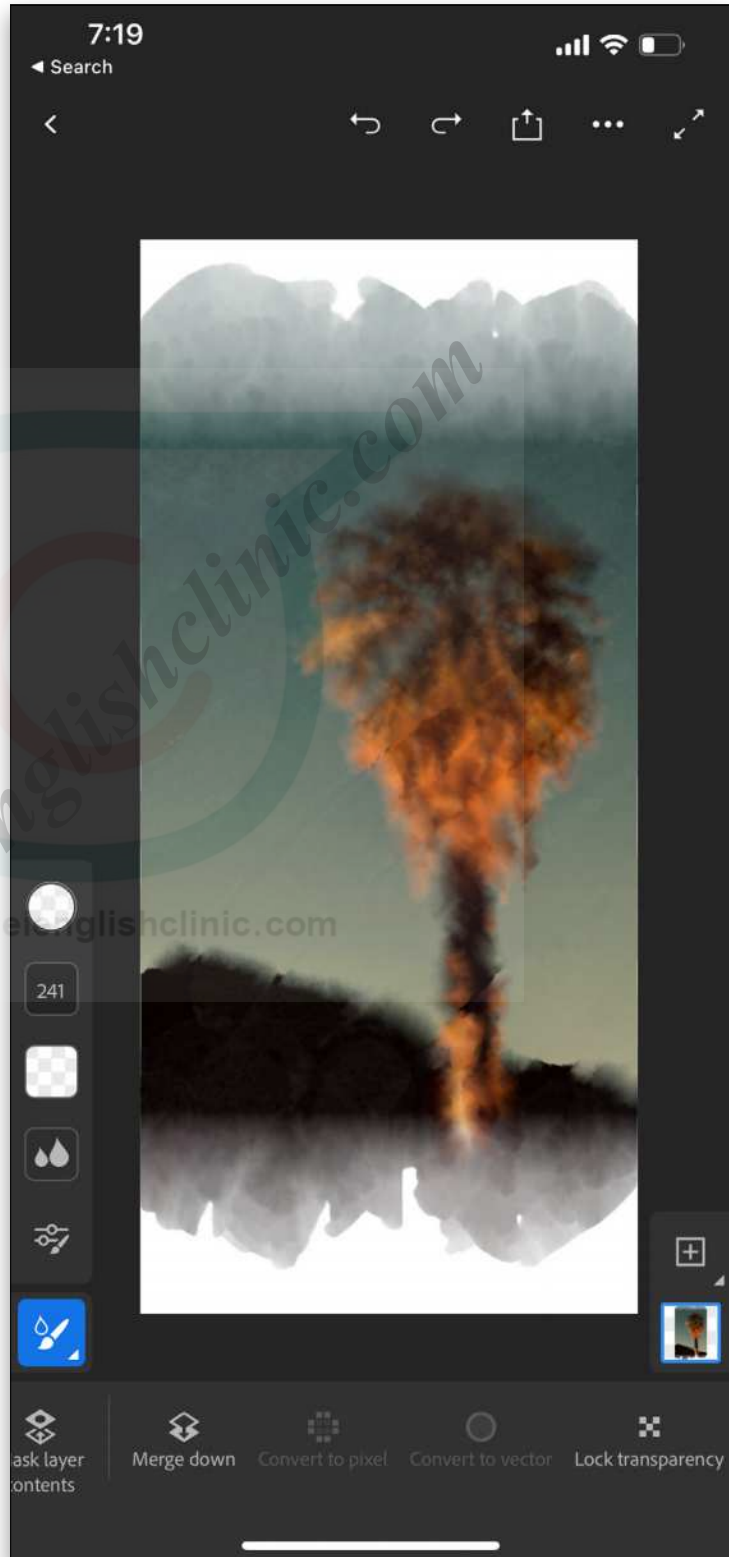


Remove color



Water Flow

So, from the tailor-made photo-to-painting solution in our PaintCan Labs App to the powerful, one-of-a-kind Live Brushes in Adobe Fresco, you now have a complete set of paints in your pocket too. I look forward to seeing what you create. Tag me on [Instagram](#) or drop me a note at bhughes@adobe.com Happy painting! ■



ALL IMAGES BY BRYAN O'NEIL HUGHES

Questions & Comments



THE CONTENT-AWARE FILL WORKSPACE

Last issue, we uncovered the Photoshop magic that is Content-Aware Fill, and it was quite glorious, indeed. We did the very simple version of it, however, and we didn't really get into what happens when it doesn't work as well as you'd hoped (or not at all), so that's what we're covering today. You'll only have to use this technique when things go wrong, so hopefully, this won't be an everyday thing, but when you do need it, it's important to know how to use this feature because it can make all the difference in the world.

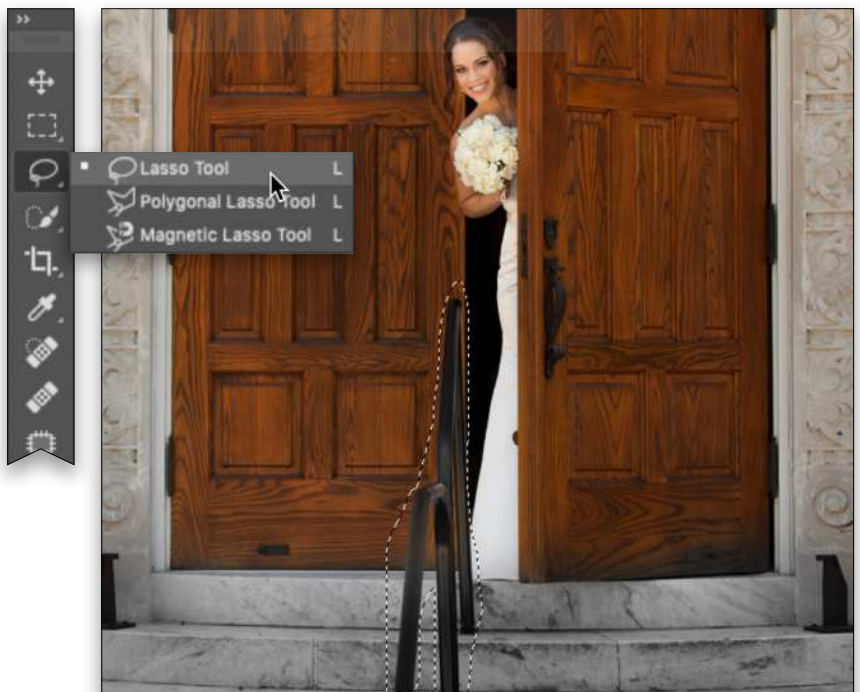
Here's our original image, and the one thing I wish wasn't there is that black metal railing right in front of the bride. Unfortunately, it falls in a place where it covers part of her dress, so it might make for a messy cleanup with regular Content-Aware Fill, but we should at least give it a try, right? Let's try the simple version first. (KelbyOne members can click [here](#) to download a low-res version of this file to follow along for practice purposes only.)



STEP ONE: Get the Lasso tool (the one that lets you draw freeform selections) by pressing the letter L on your keyboard, and draw a selection around that railing in front (as shown here).

STEP TWO: If this image is on your Background layer in Photoshop, press the Delete (PC: Backspace) key on your keyboard and the Fill dialog pops up. If your image isn't on the Background layer, go under Photoshop's Edit menu and choose Fill. It brings up the same Fill dialog either way.

Once the Fill dialog appears, make sure that, up top where it says "Contents," it's set to Content-Aware (if it says anything else, choose Content-Aware from the pop-up menu). Now click the OK button and let's see how our simple method of Content-Aware worked out.



Well, not perfect, but not terrible. The one thing I think it did brilliantly is how it fixed the bottom of her dress. Seriously, that's amazing. The door on the left, though, is kind of a mess and, in cases like this, we can use the full-featured Content-Aware Fill workspace for those areas. But first, since we like the way it worked on her dress, let's save that part in case we can use it later. Press Command-A on (PC: Ctrl-A) to select the entire image. Now press Command-C (PC: Ctrl-C) to copy the image how it looks now into memory.

STEP THREE: Press Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z) multiple times to go back through your history steps until the railing is back in the image and it has the selection you created with the Lasso tool. Then, go under the Edit menu and choose Content-Aware Fill (it has its own separate menu command because when you choose this, it brings up an entire Content-Aware Fill editing workspace as shown below).

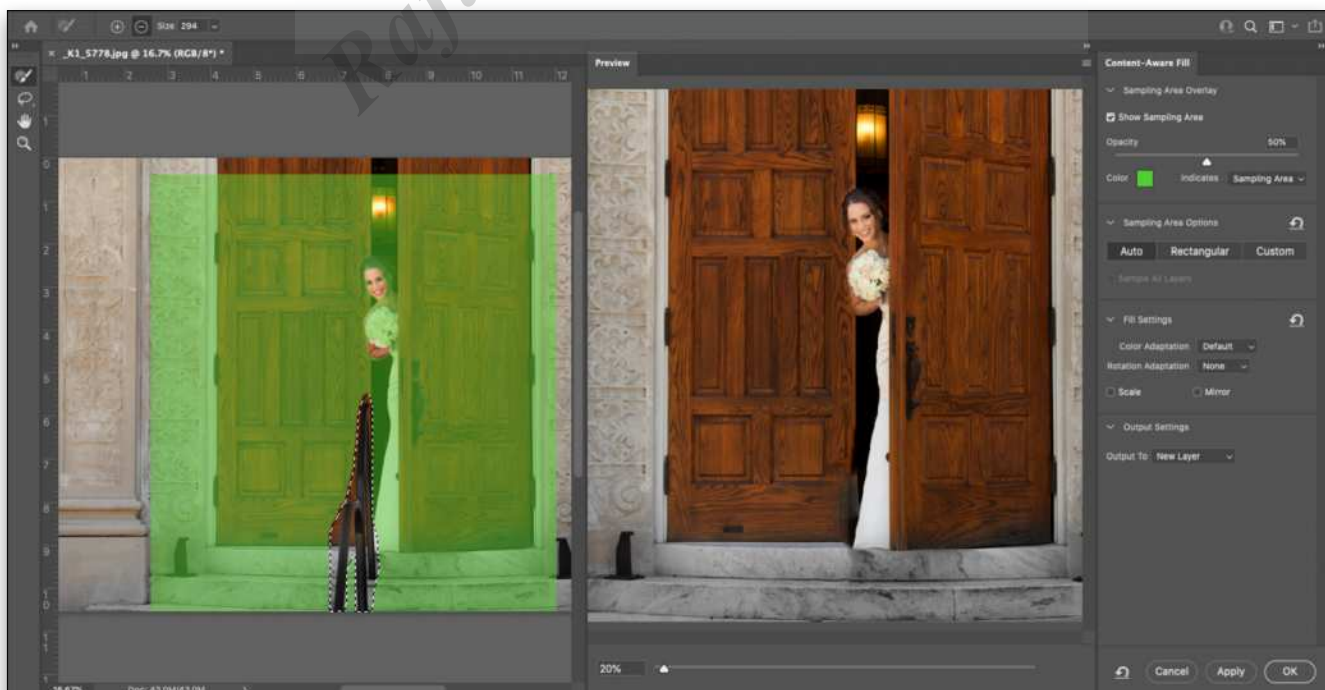
You'll see two images onscreen: the left image is your work area where you're going to influence the areas Content-Aware can use to get rid of that railing. The area in green is showing you the areas Photoshop can use for the repair, and since almost everything is in that green tint, it can pretty much pull from anywhere.

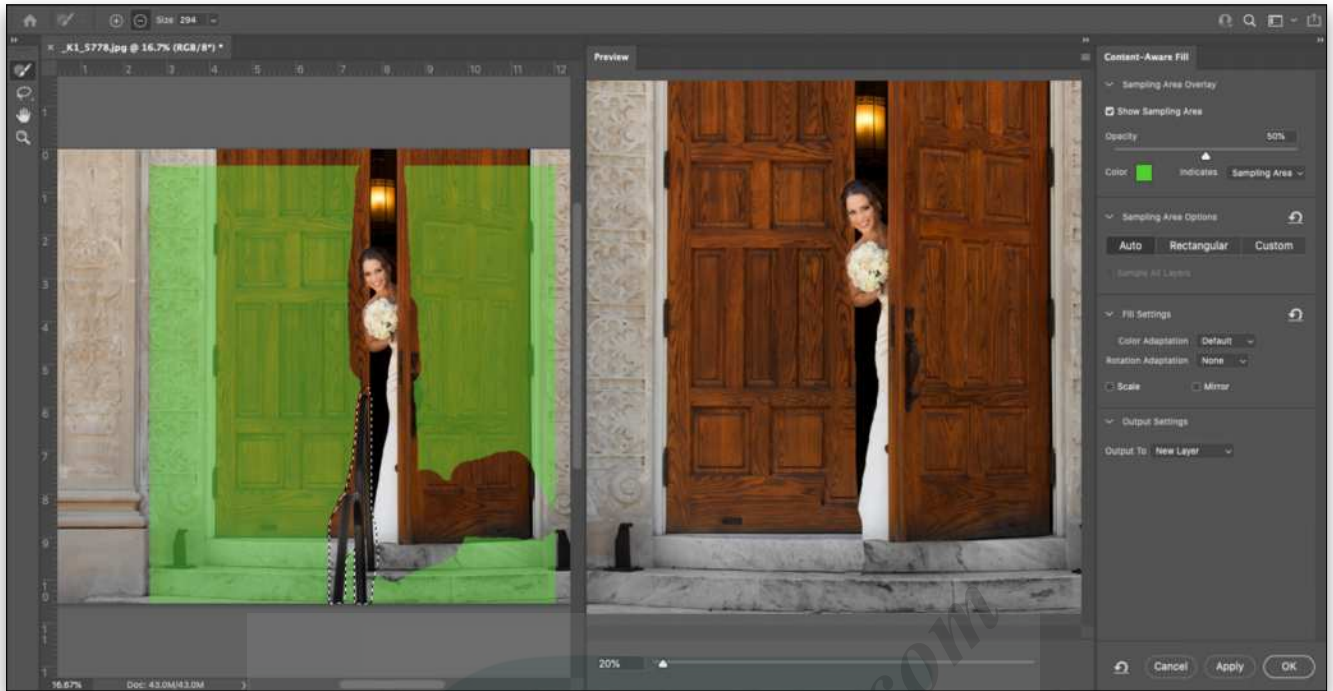
Our job is to start taking away areas that we don't want Photoshop to sample. For example, when you look at the image on the right (that's our live preview



of what's happening), you can see the fixed area has a lot of black. It probably sampled some of that from the opening between the doors, so that's what we're going to remove in the next step.

Just a note: The top section of the Content-Aware panel on the right is there to help you control what you're seeing in your work area. Where it says "Color," that little color swatch brings up a Color Picker where you could choose a different tint color. So if you were working on, say, a large area of grass, you might not want green for the tint color; you might want red or blue so it's easier to see. To the right of that, I find it easiest if the Indicates pop-up menu is set to Sampling Area. That way, anything





Step Four



Step Five

tinted is fair game for Photoshop to use and, of course, our job is to limit what it can use so it only uses areas that make sense.

STEP FOUR: At the top of the mini-Toolbar up in the top-left corner of this workspace is the Sampling Brush tool (B), which allows us to “paint away” areas we don’t want Photoshop to use for sampling. In this case, we want to paint over our bride, as well as over the opening between the doors so it no longer uses those areas.

What’s nice is, as we paint, we get a live preview over in the window on the right of how what we’re painting away affects the Content-Aware fill fix.

If you paint away an area and it makes the fix look worse, just press Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z) to undo that paint stroke. It has multiple undos so don’t sweat it; feel free to try painting away different parts. You can see that painting away the areas between the doors really helped, and now it fills in the left door pretty nicely. It’s not perfect, and we’re not done, but it did a good enough job that with

a little Clone Stamp tool work we'll be set (check out this column back in the [April issue of Photoshop User](#) for more on cloning). So we're not done yet, but we're closer.

STEP FIVE: Go ahead and just try painting away different parts and see how it affects your image using the live preview. Don't forget to undo anything that looks funky. Here I'm painting over to the left side of the railing to see if it can do a better job on the bottom of the door, and that's helping (see previous page). Again, a little cloning work will fix that up, but I want Content-Aware to do as much as possible so I have less cloning to do. The edge of her dress is still cut off, but luckily, we copied into memory a version where her dress looked great (remember?).

STEP SIX: In the Output To drop-down menu in the Output Settings at the bottom of the Content-Aware Fill panel, you can select to send your changes to the Current Layer, New Layer, or Duplicate layer. Choosing New Layer will put the Content-Aware fix on its own layer for more editing flexibility, but we're just going to choose Current Layer for now. Click OK at the bottom-right corner of the Content-Aware Fill panel to apply your edited Content-Aware Fill.

Now we're going to put that version of our photo that we copied into memory (the one with the good dress) to good use. Press Command-V (PC: Ctrl-V) to paste that copy directly on top of your image.

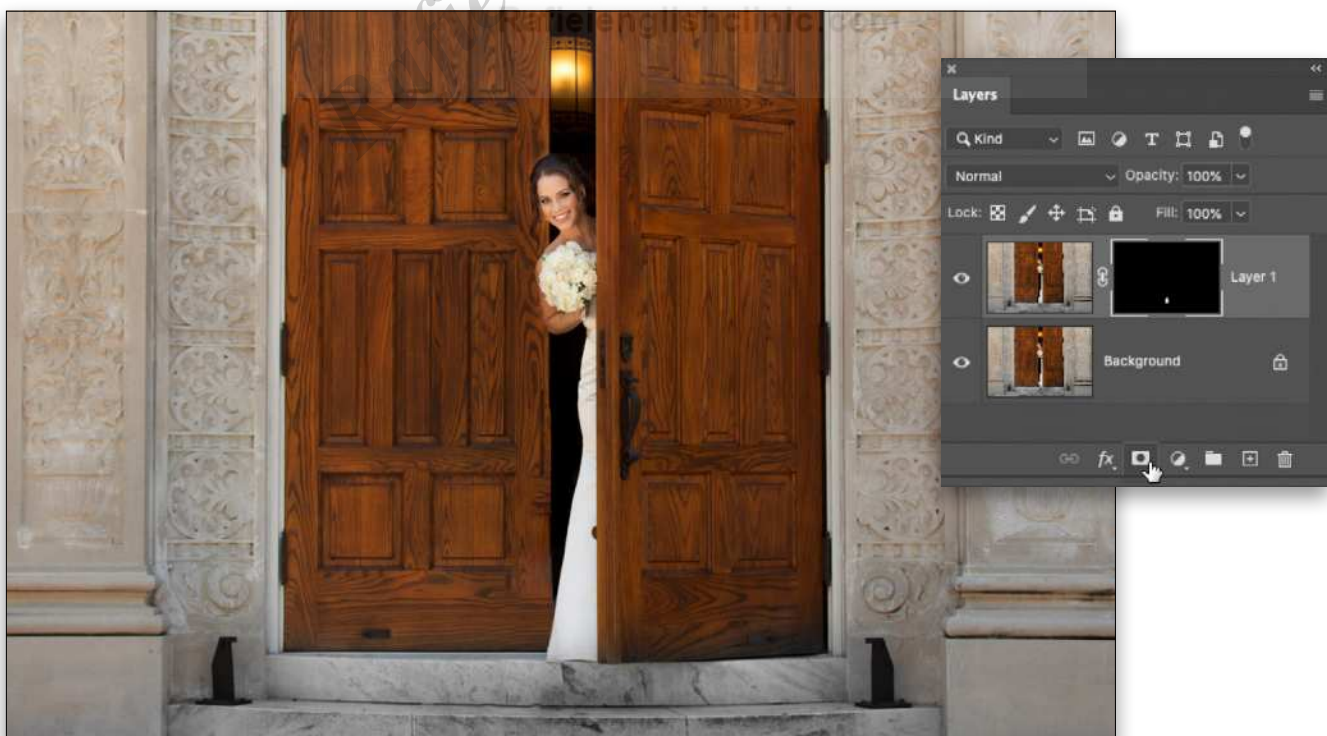
It appears on its own layer in the Layers panel. Of course, it's covering the image we just repaired, so

we're going to hide the copied image completely from view, and then we're going to paint in just the corner of her dress. Here's how: Go to the bottom of the Layers panel, hold the Option (PC: Alt) key, and then click the third icon from the left (it looks like a rectangle with a circle in the center). That's the Add Layer Mask icon. This will hide your layer (the one with the dress that looks good) behind a black mask so it won't be visible any longer.

Next, get the Brush tool (B) from the Toolbar, press D to set the Foreground color to white, and carefully paint over that area where the dress was missing, and it reveals just that part of the hidden top layer. If you paint back too much of the copied layer, press X to set your Foreground color to black, and paint away those areas. The image below shows where we painted in the edge of the dress. Again, it still needs a tiny bit of cloning, but you're pretty much there.

Of course, there are more features in the Content-Aware Fill workspace than what we've shown you here, but since this column is for folks who are new to Photoshop, we'll leave it for another time, but at least you now have a game plan when the regular Content-Aware Fill doesn't work out the way you'd hoped.

Next month our journey continues as we dig a little deeper into those things for which we jump over to Photoshop from Lightroom. See you next issue! ■ ☐



PHOTOSHOP IN ACTION

with Lightroom Classic

Creating a Complex Gallery Print Action in Photoshop
and Connecting it with Lightroom Classic



Rockstar - Self portrait
March 2021

Fernando Santos

BY FERNANDO SANTOS

In this issue, I'm going to show you a few neat tricks that I hope you'll find useful in your image-processing workflow. By the end of this article, you'll be able to export your images from Lightroom Classic and have Photoshop automatically run an action on those images that will turn them into masterpieces ready to print and hang at a gallery exhibit (or your living room). You'll also learn several rarely seen techniques that you'll be able to use in many other projects, as well.

This idea came to me during a **KelbyOne CommunityLIVE!** meeting. My friend and co-host Ross Chevalier mentioned a simple but cool way to prepare images for an exhibit: add a thin stroke outside your image, but instead of using the typical black stroke, use a color taken from the image itself.

I started by creating a simple Photoshop action to automate the process, but kept adding more features to it, ending up with a very useful set of tools and techniques that I really had to share with everyone. We're going to build the action in blocks so that after you complete one, you can add the others at your own pace. The opening image on the previous page is an example of an image processed with the action you'll be creating.

THESE ARE THE IMAGE SPECIFICATIONS AND THE RESULTS OF RUNNING THE ACTION:

- Image should be at least 10" on the longest side.
- Resolution should be 300 ppi.
- Action must be able to process square, landscape, and portrait-oriented images.
- White inner border 0.25" thick.
- Inner stroke 0.10" thick based on the image's average color.
- Image horizontally centered.
- Lower white border 2" thicker than upper border.
- Signature up to 1" tall, aligned to the image's right side.
- Image title/description pulled from metadata, aligned to the image's left side.
- Print size landscape images: 20x16", including white borders.
- Print size portrait images: 16x20", including white borders.
- Print size square images: 20x20", including white borders.

Wow! That sounds like a truckload, right? Where and how do we start?

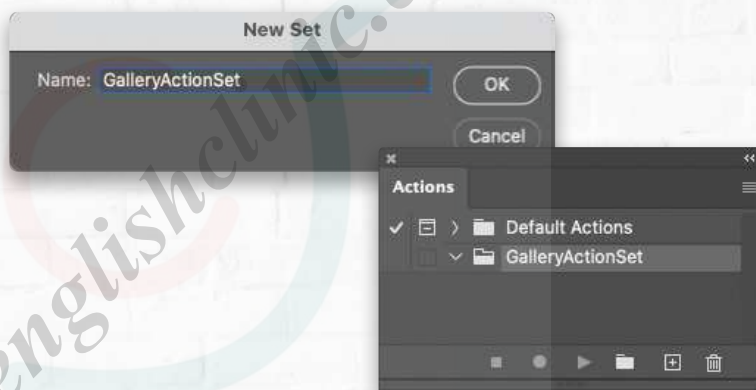
GETTING STARTED

We'll build the whole thing in four different parts. First, we'll make sure Photoshop is properly configured to record our actions and then create some helper actions and extra files. Then, we'll build our main action where most of the work is done. The next part will be adding the steps to process all possible image orientations. The last part will be connecting all we did in Photoshop with the Export command from Lightroom Classic so that the process can be totally automated.

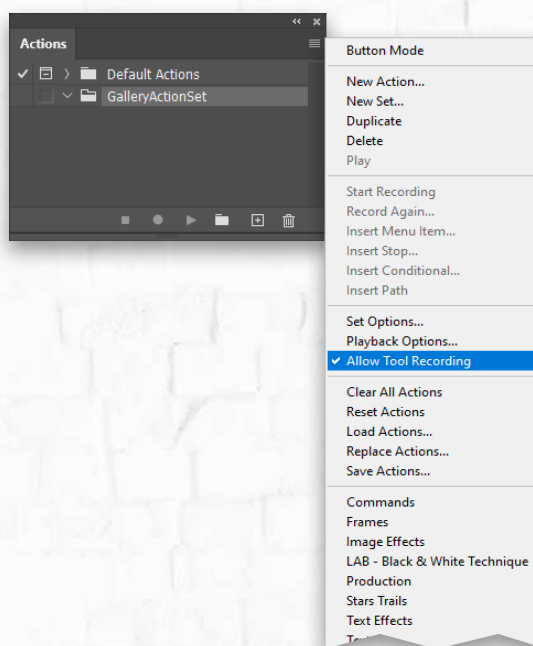
PART ONE: PREPARATION

Let's begin with the basics by setting up a couple of things in our Photoshop environment.

STEP ONE: In Photoshop, go to the Actions panel (Window > Actions), click on the folder icon at the bottom of the panel to create a new action set, name it "GalleryActionSet," and click OK.

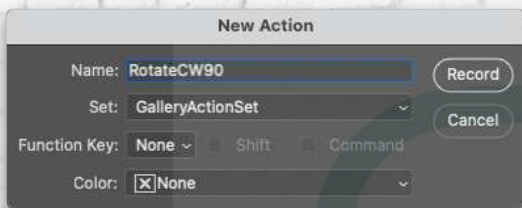


STEP TWO: Click on the Actions panel's flyout menu (at the top right) and select the Allow Tool Recording option (this is important).

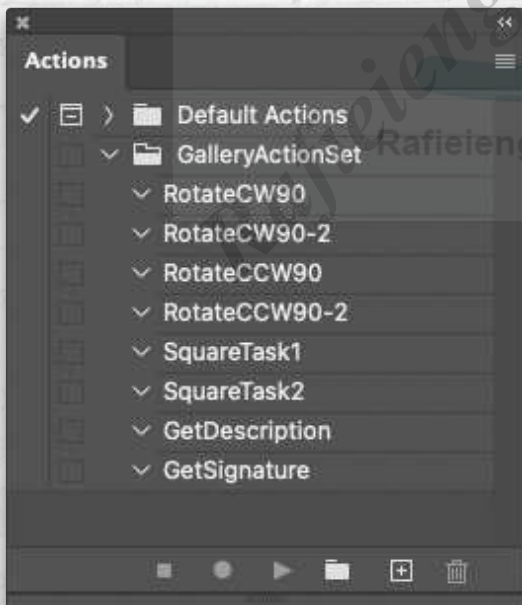


Helper Actions: Now we're going to create some empty actions that we'll need later. This is just to help us create the main action faster and be able to use it straight away.

STEP THREE: Click on the Create New Action icon (+) at the bottom of the panel. Name the first action "RotateCW90," select the GalleryActionSet in the Set drop-down menu, and click Record. The recording icon will turn red at the bottom of the Actions panel, meaning Photoshop is now recording your commands. Click the Stop Recording icon (the white square to the left of the red circle). Your first action is created, even though it has no commands at all (don't worry, stick with me and you'll understand this later).



STEP FOUR: Repeat Step Three to create seven new actions with the following names: RotateCW90-2, RotateCCW90, RotateCCW90-2, SquareTask1, SquareTask2, GetDescription, GetSignature.



Outside Helpers: You'll need two additional files for our project: One is your signature and the other is a little script that will pull the image title from the image metadata.

STEP FIVE: Create a new Photoshop document (File>New) that's 3x1" at 300 ppi. In the Layers panel, create a new layer and draw/write your signature. Reposition it with the Move tool (V) so that it's near the top and right side of the image. Hide the Background layer so your signature appears on a transparent background. Save the file (File>Save) as a PSD, naming it "MySignature."



STEP SIX: This is the most difficult step. You need to write computer code. "What?" Calm down, calm down. You could type the whole thing yourself, but if you have no experience, you could easily make a mistake and never understand why it's failing. To save you from that, [here's a link](#) to download the script Description2TextLayer.jsx. Save the script wherever you want, but please make sure you know where you saved it, and don't change the name or file extension (.jsx).

We need this script so Photoshop can read the image metadata and place the image description on a text layer. Our action will create the text layer with some placeholder text and the script replaces that text with the Description field from the image metadata. It's a simple script, and if you want to change anything or dive deeper into it, please feel free to discuss it on the [KelbyOne Community topic](#) for this issue.

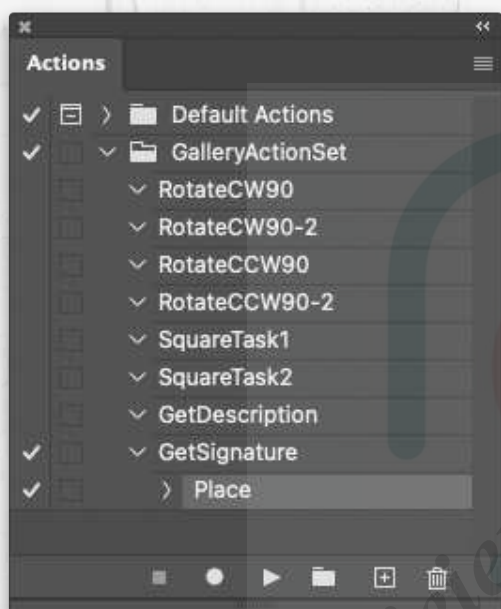
STEP SEVEN: Now we're going to record the GetSignature action. First, create a new file. The settings you choose aren't important but, as an example, you could create a 3x3" file at 300ppi. In the Actions panel, click on the GetSignature action and click the Begin Recording icon (circle) at the bottom of the panel.

Go to File>Place Embedded, navigate to your signature file (the one you created in Step Five), and click Place. Your signature will show up centered on your image. Press Enter. In the Actions panel, click the Stop Recording icon.

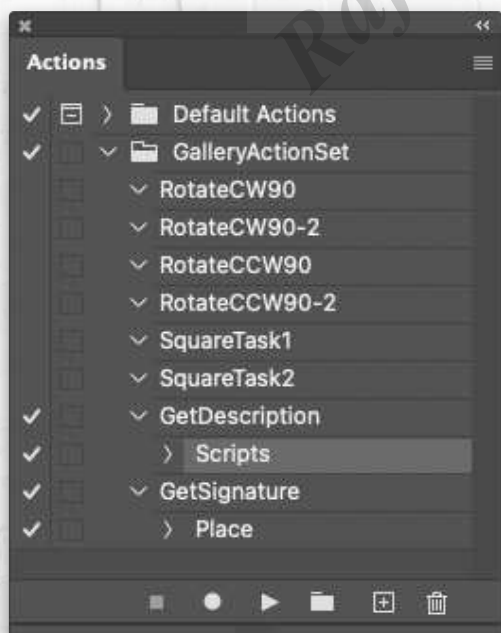
STEP EIGHT: Before you start recording the GetDescription action, grab the Type tool (T), and click anywhere on the document that you created in the previous step. Photoshop will add "lorem ipsum" as placeholder text

(the font, size, and color don't really matter at this point). In the Layers panel, double-click on the name of the text layer, and type "Description" Make sure you use lowercase except for the initial D. This is important because this layer name will be used in the script that you downloaded.

In the Actions panel, click on the GetDescription action, and click the Begin Recording icon. Go to File>Scripts>Browse, navigate to the Description2Text-Layer.jsx script, and click Open. The script will run and will update your text to the Description field from your image's metadata, which should show "(untitled)" for now. Click the Stop Recording icon. You can close this temporary file without saving it.



Step Seven



Step Eight

PART TWO: MAIN ACTION

Now that we have our helper actions and files in place, let's start recording the main action. This will be a lengthy action, but know that you can always stop recording after completing a step and work on it later. If you do, just open an image, click on the GalleryPrint action that we're creating in the next step, and run it. Then click on the last step you recorded in the Actions panel and start recording from there.

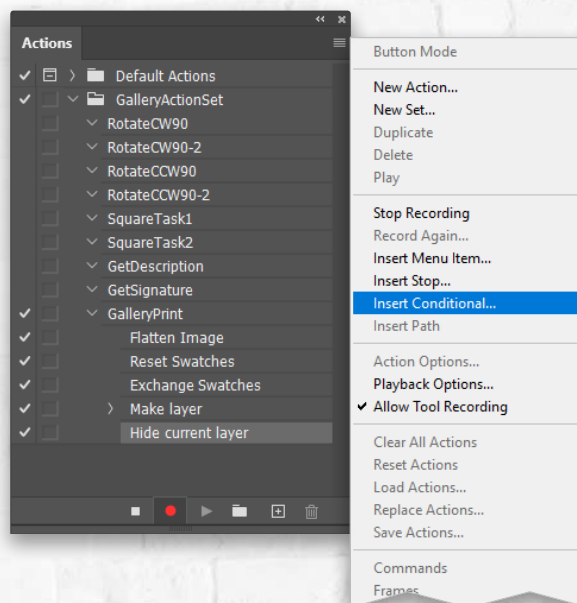
STEP NINE: Open a full-resolution, portrait-oriented JPEG file, and duplicate the Background layer (Command-J [PC: Ctrl-J]). This is needed so that we can add a Flatten Image command to the action in case you ever run the action on an image with layers.

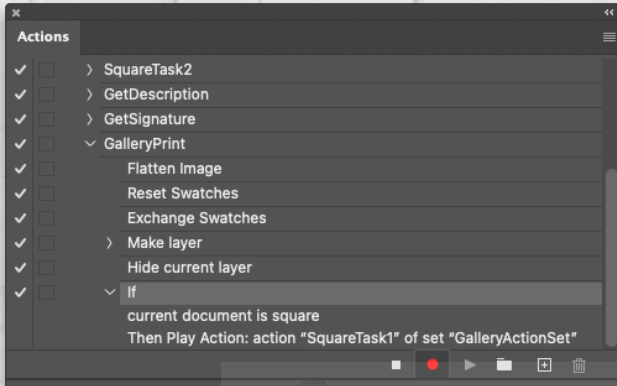
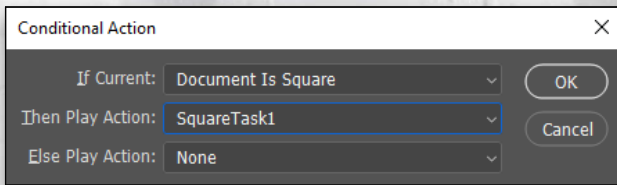
Create a new action inside the GalleryActionSet just as we did in Step Three and call it "GalleryPrint." Click Record.

Go to Layer>Flatten Image, and press D to set the Foreground and Background colors to their defaults of black and white, respectively. And then press X to switch the colors, so the Foreground color is white and the Background color is black.

STEP 10: We're first going to prepare for square images. These steps may seem weird now, but you'll understand them later. Go to Layer>New>Layer, name the layer "Square," and click OK. Now hide that layer by going to Layer>Hide Layers.

STEP 11: Go to the Actions panel's flyout menu and choose Insert Conditional. In the If Current dropdown menu, choose Document Is Square. In the Then





Play Action drop-down menu, choose SquareTask1. Leave Else Play Action as None, and click OK.

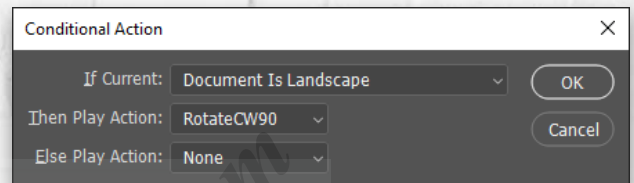
STEP 12: To find the color that we'll use for the thin stroke around our image, we'll use the Blur>Average filter. First, click on the Background layer in the Layers panel and duplicate it, and then go to Filter>Blur>Average. The layer will become a solid color.

Press I to select the Eyedropper tool, move it close to the top-left corner of your image and click to set your Foreground color to the average color of your image. Press X to flip the colors so the Foreground color is

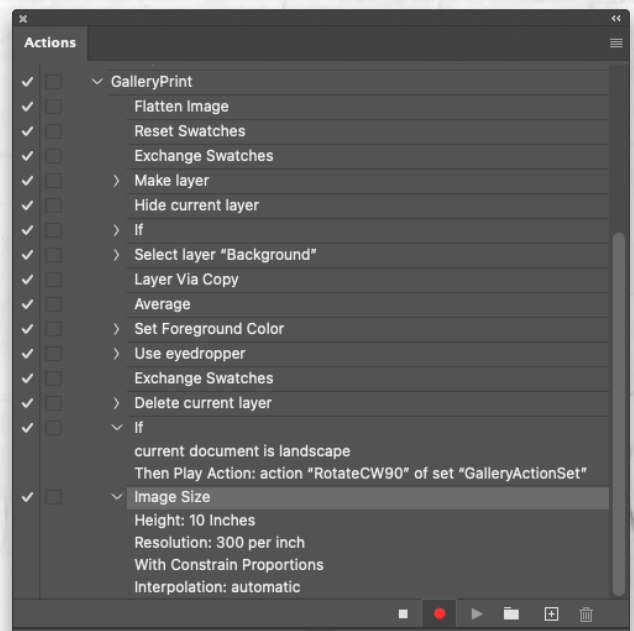
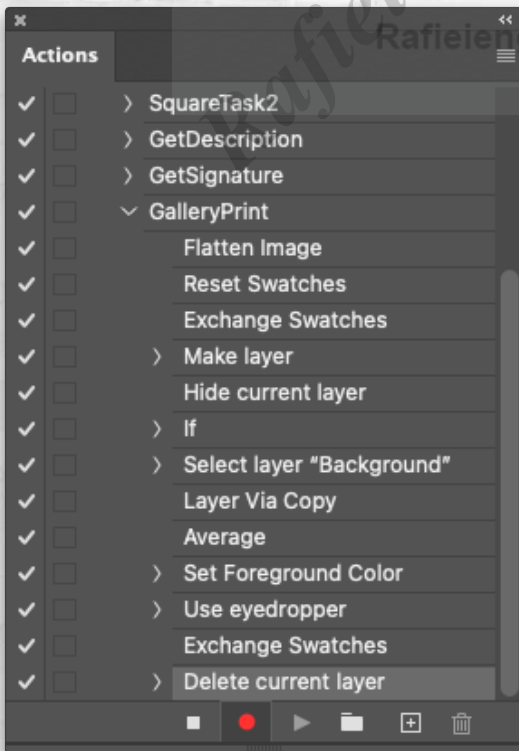
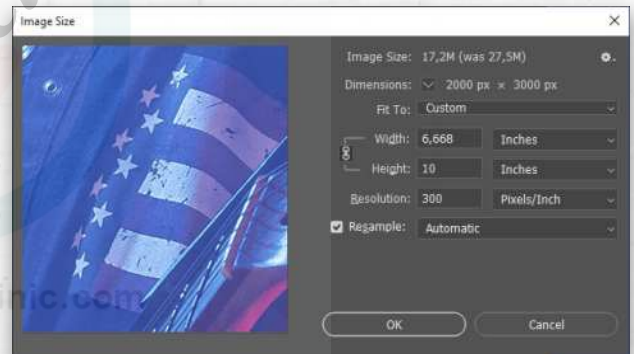
black, and the Background color is the new average color you just sampled.

In the Layers panel, drag the Background copy layer to the Delete Layer icon (trash can) to delete it.

STEP 13: Now we'll set the image size so that it fits to 10" on the longest side, but we'll have to add some conditionals again. Go to the Actions panel menu and choose Insert Conditional again. This time, set If Current to Document Is Landscape, Then Play Action to RotateCW90. For Else Play Action, leave it as None, and click OK.

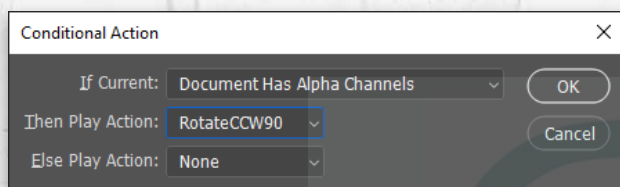


STEP 14: Now go to Image>Image Size. In the dialog, check on the Resample box and choose Automatic in the drop-down menu. Set the Resolution to 300 ppi and the Height to 10 Inches. (Note: If the Resolution is already set to 300, you need to retype 300 into

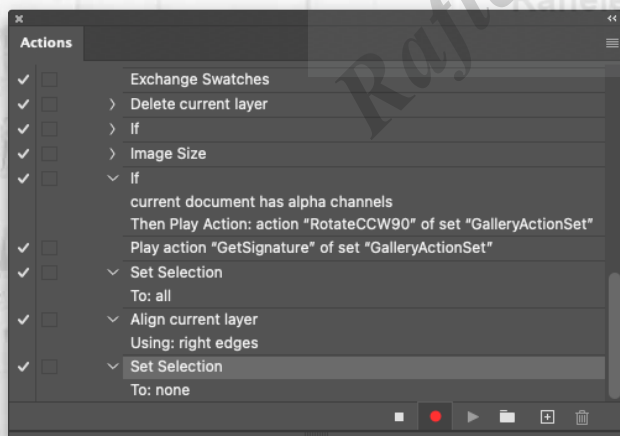


the field, otherwise, the Resolution change won't get recorded into the action.) The Width should adjust automatically (if not, make sure the Height and Width are linked) to keep the image's original proportions. Click OK.

STEP 15: We need to add one more conditional, so choose Insert Conditional again. Configure the dialog as follows: If Current Document Has Alpha Channels, Then Play Action RotateCCW90 Else Play Action None. Click OK. This conditional and the one we created in Step 13, will take care of documents in landscape orientation (I'll explain in more detail later).



STEP 16: In the Actions panel, scroll up to the GetSignature action and click on it. Click the Play Selection icon (triangle) at the bottom of the panel, and then press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to Select All. Press V to select the Move tool, go to Layer>Align Layers to Selection>Right Edges. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect. Your signature is now aligned to the right edge of your image, but not yet in the correct location (as you can see by my signature in the image to the right). We'll fix that later.



STEP 17: Now we'll add the image description/title placeholder. Click on the Type tool in the Toolbar. In the Options Bar, choose a font you like (I used Proxima Nova Regular). Set the font size to 16 pt and click on

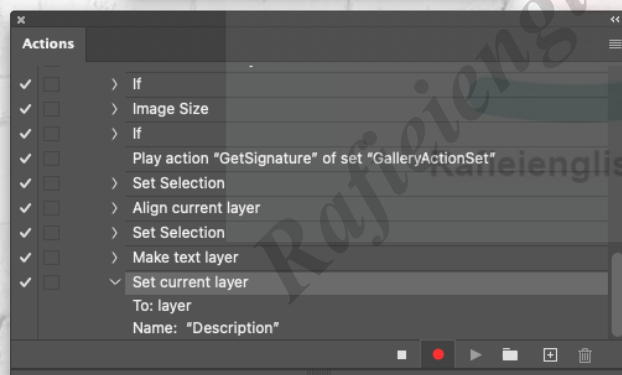
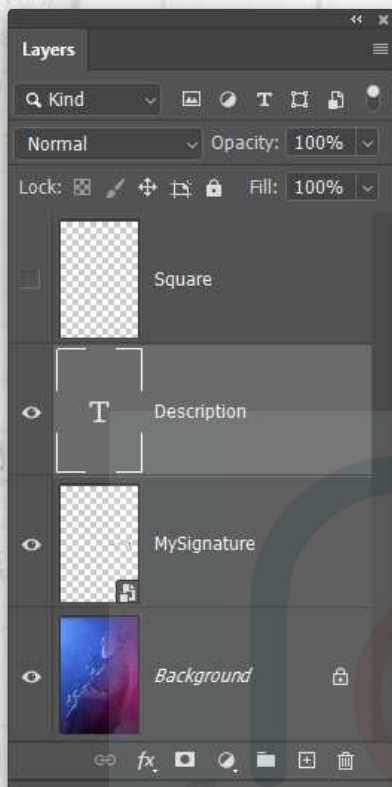
the Left Align Text icon. The text color should already be black because that's your Foreground color.

STEP 18: Now this is important: Click-and-drag from near the top-left corner of your image until you reach the middle of the image (you'll probably see some smart guides). The paragraph box should be at least 0.8" high to accommodate three lines of text, which should be enough for the image title/description. You should see a head-up display (HUD) as you're drawing the box showing you the height and width.

Photoshop will add some dummy text to fill the paragraph frame. Click on the checkmark in the Options Bar to accept it. Don't worry about the contents for now; we'll fix it later.

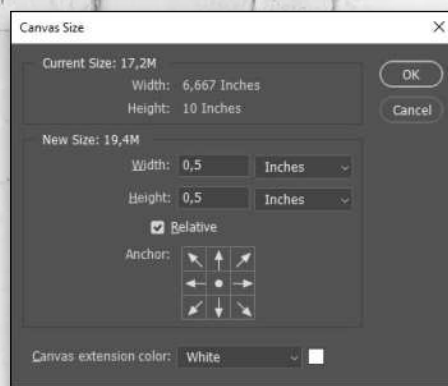


STEP 19: Go to the Layers panel, double-click on the text layer name, and change it to "Description." Again, make sure you use lowercase except for the initial D as we use that layer name in our script.

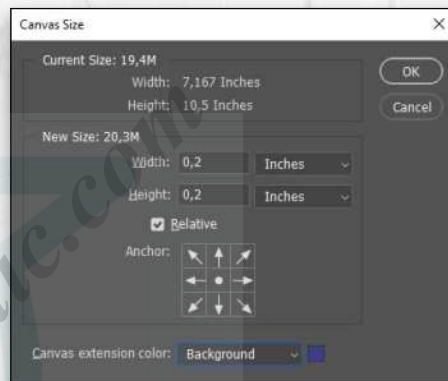


STEP 20: We need to align the paragraph text box to the image's left side. We could have done it when we dragged it in place, but this way will make sure it's properly aligned. Press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to select all. Go to Layer>Align Layers to Selection>Left Edges, and press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect.

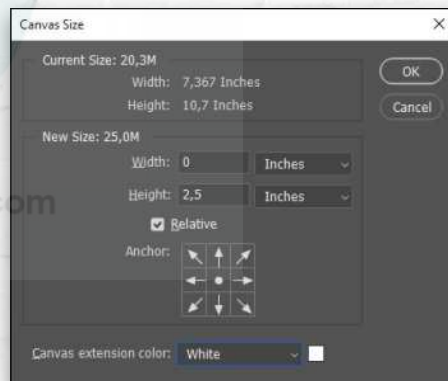
STEP 21: Time to add the inner white border and the thin colored stroke. Go to Image>Canvas Size. Check on the Relative option and add 0.5" to the Width and Height of the document. The Canvas Extension Color should be set to White. Click OK and it will add a 0.25" white border around the image.



Step 21



Step 22



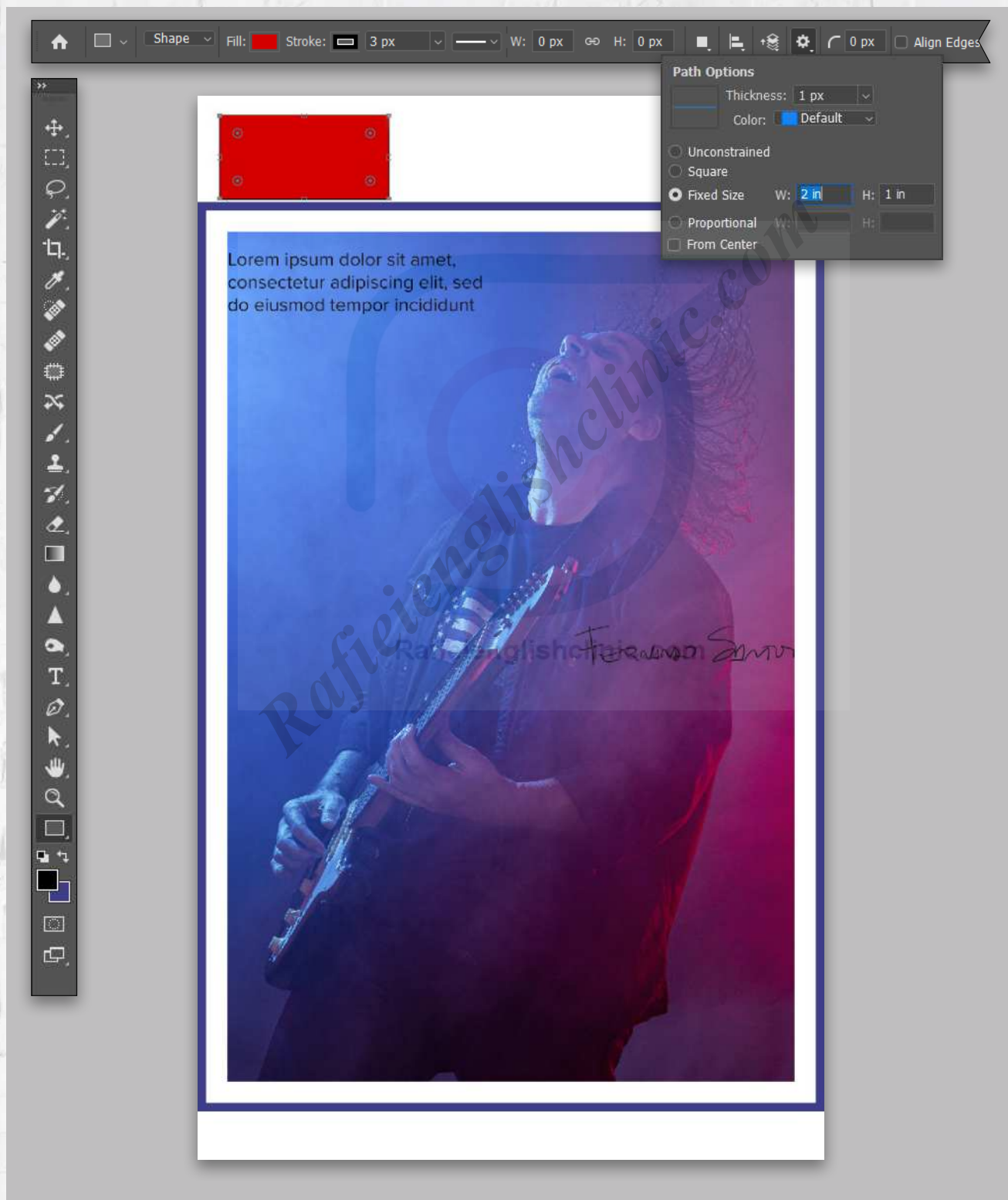
Step 23

STEP 22: Repeat the Canvas Size command, but this time set the Width and Height to 0.2", and instead of White for the Canvas Extension Color, choose Background because that's the Blur>Average color from Step 12. Click OK, and this will add a 0.1" thin stroke to your image, using a color that goes well with it. Beautiful!

STEP 23: Let's use Canvas Size again to add some space for the signature and image description/title. We want to add 1.25" at the bottom of the image. To keep everything vertically centered, we'll set the Height to 2.5" with Relative turned on. Leave the Width set to 0, and choose White as the Canvas Extension Color. Click OK.

STEP 24: Now let's move our signature and text to their final locations. We want to have some space between the text and signature and the colored thin stroke, and since we have an inner white border of 0.25", let's use that same amount. There's no easy way to move the text to that location, so we'll have to use a different strategy.

Choose the Rectangle tool (U) in the Toolbar. In the Options Bar, make sure you have Shape selected as the Tool Mode. You can pick any color for the Fill color. Click on the Gear icon, choose Fixed Size, and type "2 in" in the Width field and "1 in" in the Height field. Now click-and-drag it near the top-left corner of your image. You'll get something like this.

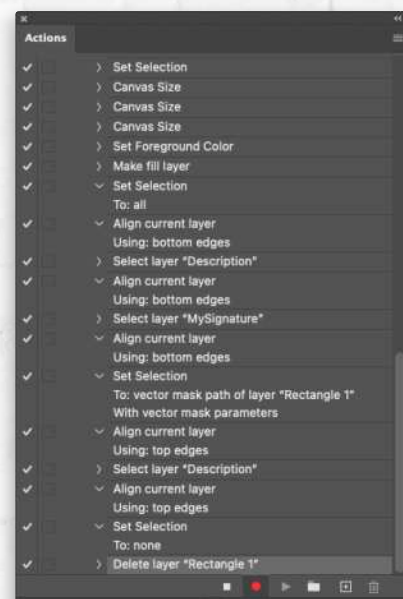


STEP 25: Press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to select all. Go to Layer>Align Layers to Selection>Bottom Edges, which will move the rectangle down to the bottom of the image. Since it's 1" high, there will be a 0.25" gap between it and the stroke, which we'll use to separate the text and signature from the stroke.

In the Layers panel, click on the text layer called Description to make it active. Go to Layer>Align Layers to Selection>Bottom Edges. Now click on the MySignature layer, and repeat the same alignment command. It should look something like this.



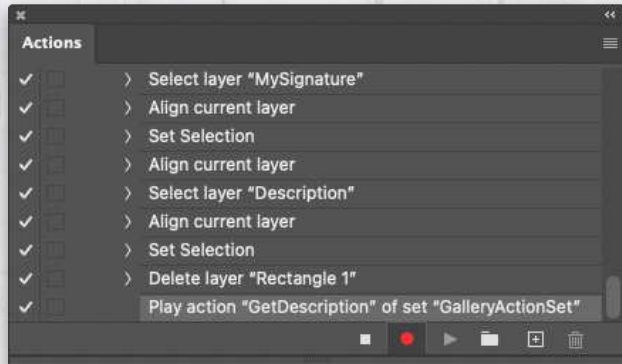
Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect. You can delete the rectangle shape layer, as we don't need it anymore; it was created just to align our text and signature to the exact location we wanted.



STEP 26: We need to align our text and signature to the top of the rectangle shape. Go to the Layers panel and, while holding the Command (PC: Ctrl) key, click on the rectangle shape layer's thumbnail to load that layer as a selection.

With the MySignature layer active, go to Layer>Align Layers to Selection>Top Edges. Now make the Description text layer active and apply the same alignment command.

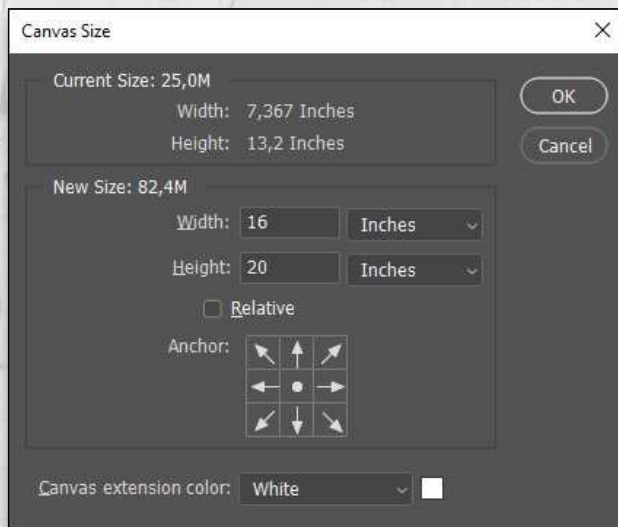
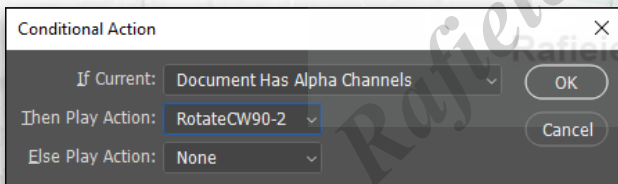
STEP 27: In the Actions panel, scroll up to the GetDescription action, click on it, and play it. This will run the GetDescription action, recording that command in the main action. The text at the bottom right should change to "(untitled)."



STEP 28: We're almost done, believe it or not! We just need to set the final canvas size. For a portrait-oriented image, we want it to be 16x20"; for a landscape-oriented image, it will be 20x16". If it's square, we'll use 20x20".

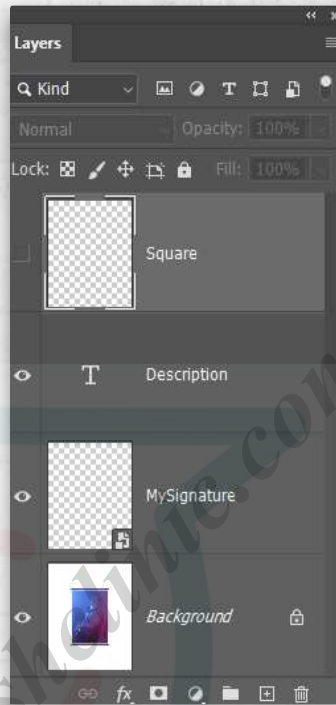
Since we have three different sizing options, we'll use some conditionals again, so go to the Actions panel's flyout menu and choose Insert Conditional. Set it to If Current Document Has Alpha Channels, Then Play Action RotateCW90-2, Else Play Action None. Click OK.

These conditional actions are still empty. This specific one will take care of documents that are landscape-oriented. More on this later.



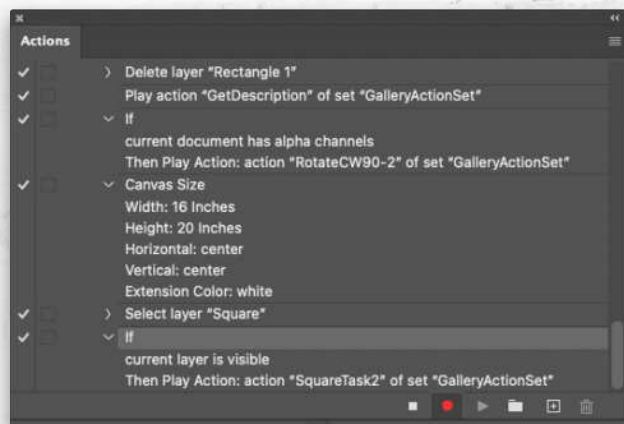
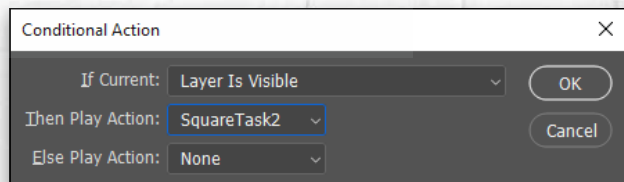
Step 29

STEP 29: Let's resize our canvas for a portrait-oriented image, so go to Image>Canvas Size. This time make sure the Relative option is *not* checked. Set the Width to 16", Height to 20", and the Canvas Extension Color to White. Click OK.

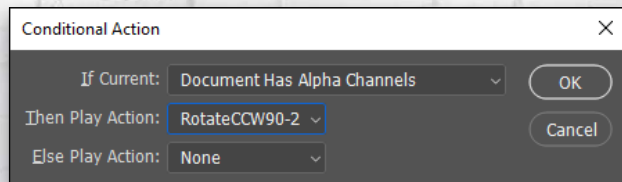


STEP 30: Go to the Layers panel and click on the empty layer named Square to make it active.

STEP 31: Now go once again to the Actions panel and choose Insert Conditional. Set it to If Current Layer Is Visible, Then Play Action SquareTask2, Else Play Action None. This will take care of an additional step we need for square images.

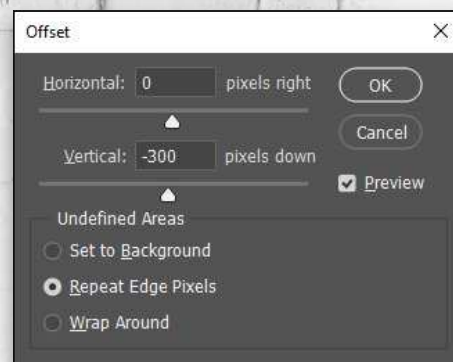


STEP 32: We still need to insert one last conditional, this time for landscape-oriented images. Set this one to If Current Document Has Alpha Channels, Then Play Action RotateCCW90-2, Else Play Action None.



STEP 33: This will be the final step for the main action. All we have to do is flatten our image and adjust the border so that the bottom is 2" thicker than the top. First, go to Layer>Flatten Image. A pop-up asks if you want to discard hidden layers. Click OK.

Finally, go to Filter>Other>Offset, and set Horizontal to 0 and Vertical to -300 pixels. Because we're working with an image set at 300 ppi, you'll see everything shift up by 1", making the bottom border 2" thicker



than the top border. Choose the Repeat Edge Pixels option, and click OK.

Congratulations! You've completed all the steps on the main action. You can now stop the recording. Currently, the action can handle portrait-oriented images. Adjusting it so that it can handle square- and landscape-oriented images will be easy because we already have everything in place. We just need to record a few steps on those empty actions we initially created.



PART THREE: HANDLING DIFFERENT IMAGE ORIENTATIONS

We'll start with square images, which are easier. We'll record the steps for the two empty actions, SquareTask1 and SquareTask2.

STEP 34: We need to set up a few things before we can start recording. Open one of your images and resize it to the same dimensions we used in Step 14. It really doesn't matter as long as you have a 300-ppi image with less than 20" on each side.

In the Layers panel, add an empty layer and name it "Square." Now click on its visibility Eye icon to hide it. Click on any other layer so that the Square layer isn't active.

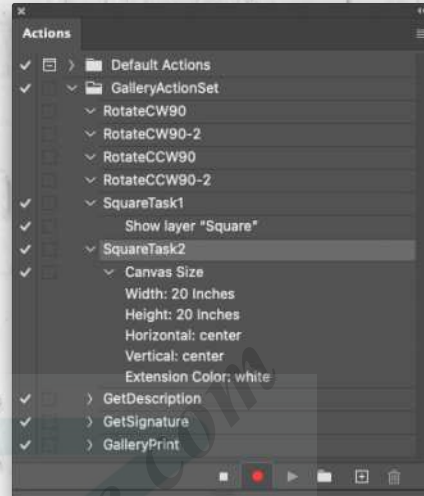
STEP 35: In the main GalleryPrint action, after it adds the description and signature, a square image would no longer be considered square. For that reason, we had to find a way to test for a square image early in the main action and save the result so that we could use it later.

Back in Steps 10–11, we created an empty layer, named it Square, and hid it. Then we inserted a conditional to check if an image is square, and if it is, it will run the SquareTask1 action. So now let's record SquareTask1, which will have just two commands.

Click on the SquareTask1 action in the Actions panel and then click the Begin Recording icon. Go to the Layers panel, click on the layer named Square, and then click where its visibility Eye icon used to be to make that layer visible. Click the Stop Recording icon in the Actions panel. This first action is done.

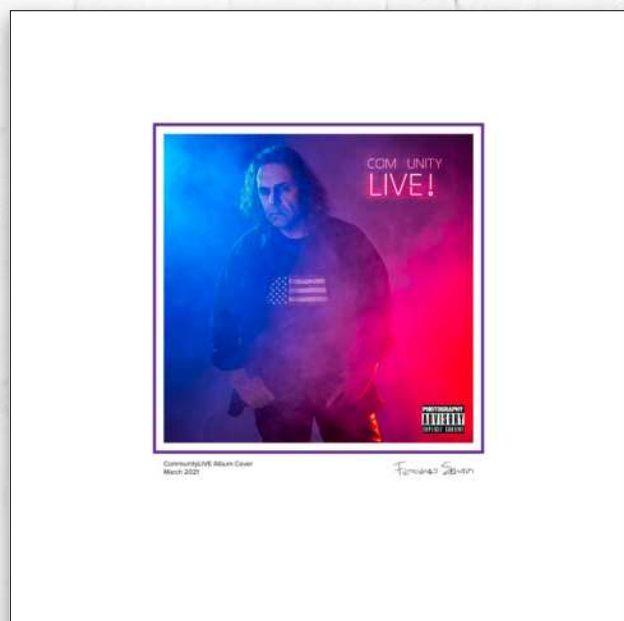
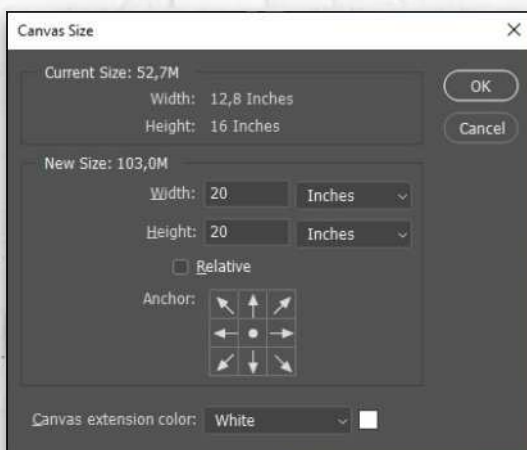
STEP 36: Let's record SquareTask2. Click on its name on the Actions panel and click the Begin Recording icon. Go to Image>Canvas Size, and then set both the Height and Width to 20". Make sure Relative is

not ticked and choose White as the Canvas Extension Color. Click OK, and click Stop Recording in the Actions panel. The SquareTask2 action is complete.



To make sure everything is working as expected, open a square image, and run the main GalleryPrint action. When the action hits that first conditional and sees that the image is square, it will run the SquareTask1 action, which makes the Square layer in the document visible. Then toward the end of the action, after it makes the Square layer the active layer, when it sees that the Square layer is visible, it will run the SquareTask2 action, which sets the canvas size to 20x20".

If you didn't miss anything, your main action is now able to process both square and portrait-oriented images.



Processing Landscape-Oriented Images: If we rotate a landscape-oriented image by 90°, it can be processed the same as a portrait-oriented one, but we just have to rotate it back to its original orientation before placing the other elements and resizing the canvas.

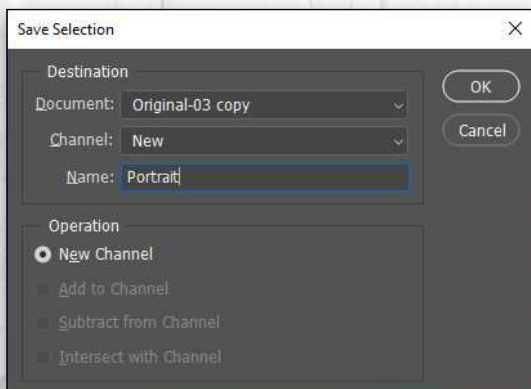
To help us with landscape-oriented images, we created four actions: The first, RotateCW90, will save an alpha channel (a saved selection) so that the GalleryPrint action can later check if the image was originally landscape-oriented, and then it will rotate the image 90° clockwise. This will happen just before the Image Size command in the main GalleryPrint action that we added in Step 14 that sets the Height to 10" and the Resolution to 300 ppi. Right after the Image Size command, the second action, RotateCCW90, will run when it sees there's an alpha channel and rotate the image 90° counterclockwise back to its original orientation.

Near the end of the GalleryPrint action, just before the Canvas Size command, it will run RotateCW90-2 to set it to portrait orientation again, and then run RotateCCW-2 after the Canvas Size command to delete the alpha channel and put it back again to its original orientation.

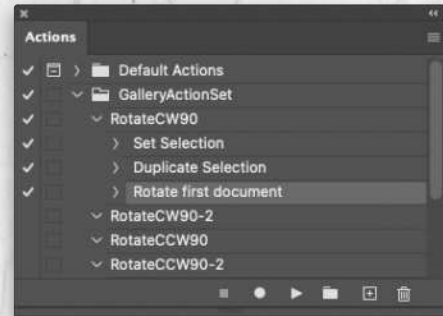
Let's record these last four actions but before doing that, open any image (there are no specific requirements for this image).

STEP 37: After opening any image, go to the Actions panel, click on the RotateCW90 action, and then click the Begin Recording icon.

Press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to select all. Now go to Select>Save Selection, and in the dialog, choose New in the Channel drop-down menu and name the selection "Portrait." Click OK.



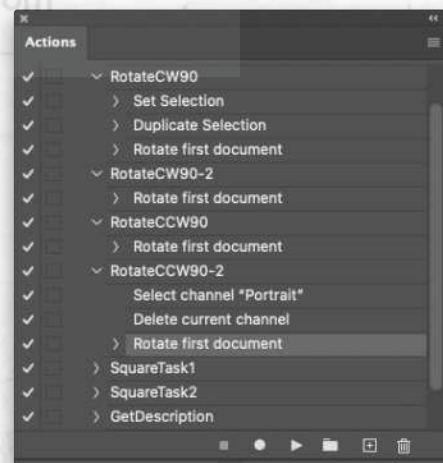
STEP 38: Now go to Image>Image Rotation>90° Clockwise. This action is complete, so click the Stop Recording icon.



STEP 39: In the Actions panel, click on the RotateCW90-2 action and start recording. Go to Image>Image Rotation>90° Clockwise, and stop recording.

STEP 40: In the Actions panel, click on the RotateCCW90 action, and start recording. Go to Image>Image Rotation>90° Counter Clockwise. Click the stop recording icon. Another one done.

STEP 41: In the Actions panel, click on the RotateCCW90-2 action, and start recording. Go to the Channels panel (Window>Channels), click on the channel named Portrait, and drag it to the Delete Current Channel icon (trash can) to delete it. Now go to Image>Image Rotation>90° Counter Clockwise. Stop recording. You can close the image you've been using without saving it.



You've completed recording all the actions. Yay! Go ahead and test the GalleryPrint action with a landscape-oriented photo.

The GalleryPrint action is great as it is but as far as Photoshop automation goes, it can be improved if we use the File>Automate>Batch command or droplets.



Rockstar - Self portrait
March 2021

FERNANDO SIMON

We can export images from Lightroom Classic into a specific folder and then process that folder all at once with either of those two options. There's a third option, however, that seems to be less known, but also very useful and powerful, and that's exporting from Lightroom Classic and automatically running a Photoshop action on the exported images. Can you believe that?

PART FOUR: AUTOMATING FROM WITHIN LIGHTROOM CLASSIC

We recorded a useful action, but we can make it even better with a small tweak so we can use it with droplets. A droplet is a small Photoshop application created from an existing action. You can save it to your desktop and then you can simply drag-and-drop an image onto it, and it executes the action on that image. The good thing is that you can also drop a folder full of images on the droplet, and it will automatically process all of them.

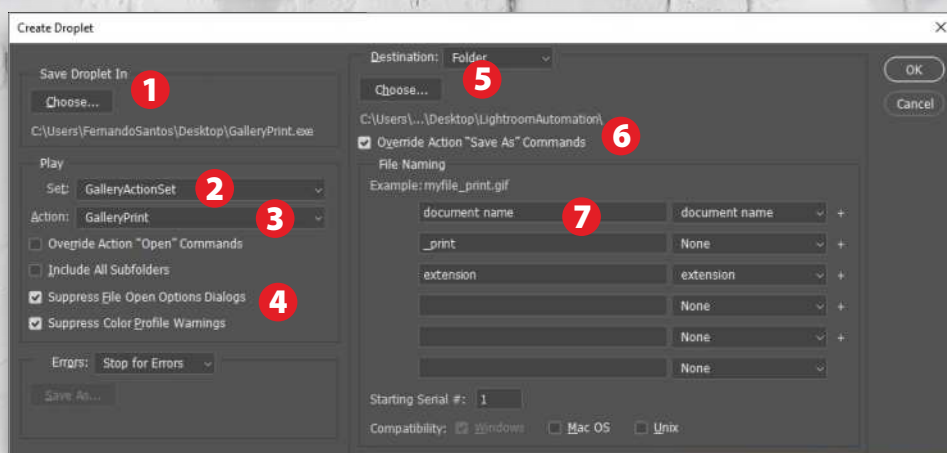
That's awesome, but what if we could export from Lightroom Classic directly to the droplet and have it process our exported images? It's easier than you might imagine.

We need to add one last step, however, to our existing action: we need to tell our action to save the image. The Save As command must exist in the action but the droplet will override the save destination.

STEP 42: Go to the Actions panel and look for the GalleryPrint action we created. To add one more step to it, you can either expand the action and click on the last step, or you can leave the action collapsed and just click on its name, and then click the Begin Recording icon.

Go to File>Save As, and select your preferences in the resulting dialogs; for example, save the file to your desktop as a JPEG using Maximum Quality. You can now stop recording the action. We just needed to add this extra Save As command because it will be needed for our droplet.

STEP 43: Let's create our droplet. Go to File>Automate>Create Droplet. A new dialog will appear that may seem a bit overwhelming at first but there's not that much you need to worry about. Let's take a look at it by the numbers.

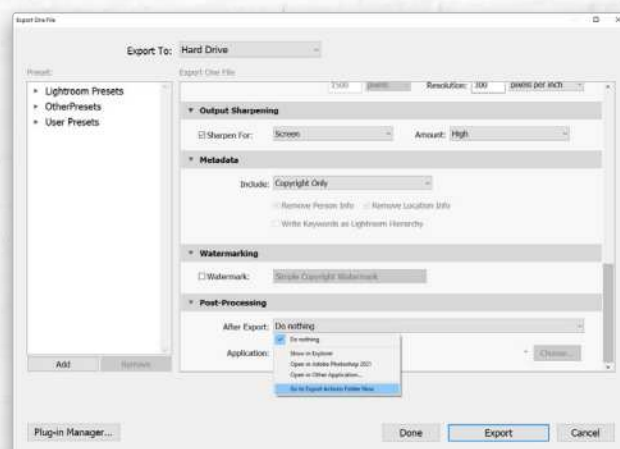


1. In the Save Droplet In section, click Choose to name the droplet and select where to save it on your computer. We'll save it to the desktop and call it GalleryPrint.exe (on a Mac, it will have a .app extension).
2. In the Play section, choose the action set; if you used my suggestion, it's called GalleryActionSet.
3. Choose the action that the droplet will run, which is our GalleryPrint action.
4. Turn on Suppress File Open Options Dialogs and Suppress Color Profile Warnings.
5. In the Destination section, choose Folder and then click the Choose button to pick or create the folder where you want your final images to be saved after being processed by the droplet. In our example, we'll be saving those images inside a folder called "LightroomAutomation" on the desktop.
6. *Important:* You must check on the option Override Action "Save As" Commands. This will allow the droplet to change the Save As command that you recorded in Step 42 so that it saves to the folder you selected in #5 above.
7. The last option will be to create the rules the droplet will use to generate a filename. In our example, we'll use the original filename followed by "_print" and the file extension.

folder (or whatever folder you specified). You can also drag-and-drop a folder with several images in it, and the droplet will process them all. How cool is that?

STEP 44: We're almost done, but we need to talk about a secret location inside our machines. If we store our droplets in this secret location, Lightroom Classic will be able to use them. Well, not exactly use them, but send our images to that location where they'll be processed by the droplets.

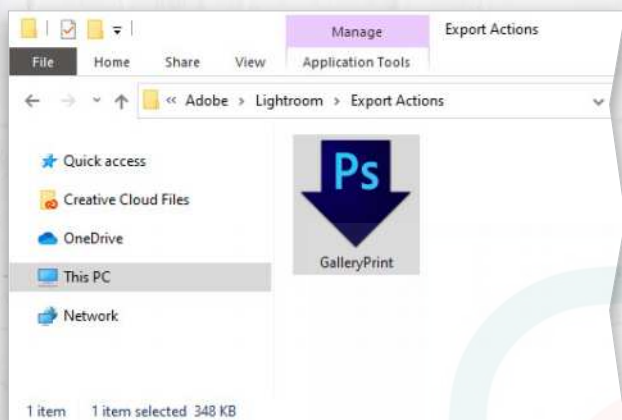
So where is that? How can you find the location? Easy! Launch Lightroom Classic and go to the Export dialog (Command-Shift-E [PC: Ctrl-Shift-E]). On the right side of the Export dialog, scroll down to the Post Processing section, click on the After Export drop-down menu, and then choose Go to Export Actions Folder Now.



Click OK and Photoshop will create your new droplet on your desktop (or the location you selected in #1 above). The droplet is now fully functional; drag one of your final images to the droplet and a few seconds later it will be re-created according to the action steps and saved into the LightroomAutomation

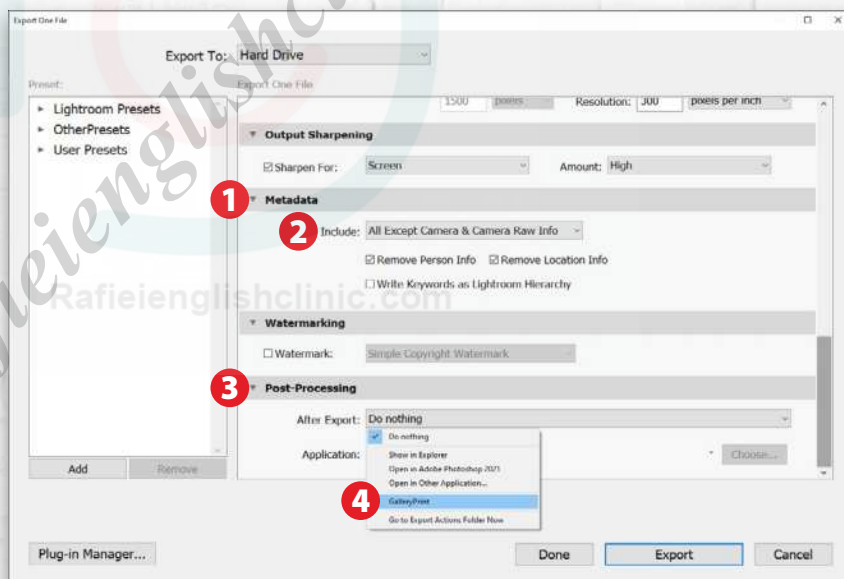
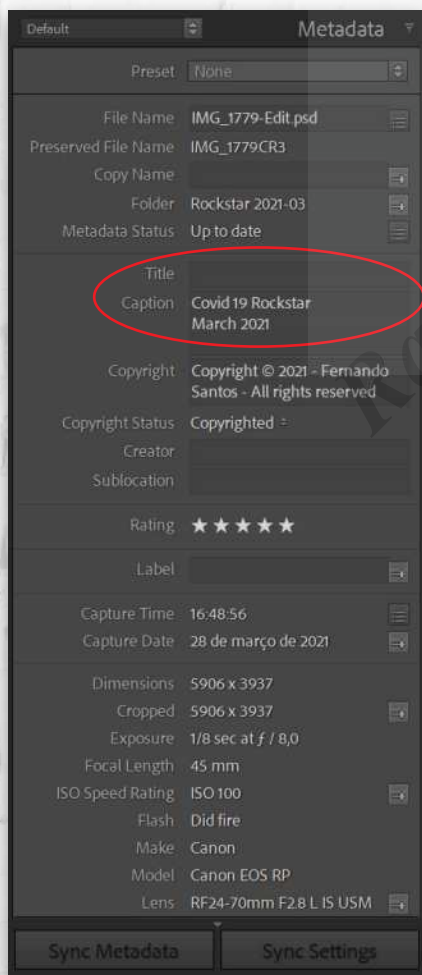
STEP 45: A Windows Explorer or a macOS Finder window will open with the “secret location” you need to know. On my PC it’s at this location: C:\Users\FernandoSantos\AppData\Roaming\Adobe\Lightroom\Export Actions. On a Mac, it’s User/Library/Application Support/Adobe/Lightroom/Export Actions.

Drag the droplet that you saved earlier on your desktop into that folder. Lightroom Classic will now be able to do something really, I mean, really cool!



STEP 46: Go back to Lightroom Classic and select a few images to test the new export capabilities. If you want the images to have a title/description, remember you need to add it to the image metadata; otherwise, it will display “(untitled).” To do that, go to the Metadata panel in the Library module and, in the Caption field, type the image title/description you want to use. One or two lines are probably enough, but you have room for up to three lines if you want.

STEP 47: With the images you want to export selected, press (Command-Shift-E [PC: Ctrl-Shift-E]) to Export. In the Export dialog, if you select any Image Format other than DNG or Original, the Include drop-down menu will become active in the Metadata section. Most people probably only export the copyright metadata; however, that means the Caption metadata won’t be present in the image passed to the droplet, and the image will read “(untitled).” So in that Include drop-down menu, choose All Except Camera & Camera Raw Info so the droplet can use the Caption field to create the title/description.




Then, go down to the Post Processing section and click on the After Export drop-down menu. You should see your droplet in the list. Choose it, and click Export. Lightroom will ask you to select a folder to save the exported images. You can select any destination, click Open, and enjoy!

Lightroom Classic will export all your selected images to the folder you indicated, then it will pass all those images to your droplet, which in turn will process the images and will write their new versions to the folder you indicated when you created the droplet. And because you selected to Suppress File Open Options Dialogs when you created the droplet, any RAW files you export will bypass Adobe Camera Raw in Photoshop. Congratulations! You made it!

FINAL THOUGHTS

I hope you were able to follow me to the end. It was a long but pleasant journey. We presented several useful techniques that you can use not just for action creation, but also for scripting, executing conditional actions, and as a way to extend and automate Lightroom Classic with Photoshop droplets.

You should be able to adapt this action to use different rules and sizes. It shouldn't be too difficult to get different metadata fields, now that you have a working script to do so. Also, even if the action isn't useful to you, I hope the droplet connection from Lightroom Classic will allow you to do a lot more when you export from Lightroom Classic.

If you have any questions, please visit the KelbyOne Community. Each issue of *Photoshop User* has its own topic in the **Community** where you can ask questions and provide feedback. Don't forget to share your new ideas based on this "framework" so that others can benefit from that too. Thank you for staying with me until the very end. See you in the KelbyOne Community! ■ 

ALL IMAGES BY FERNANDO SANTOS

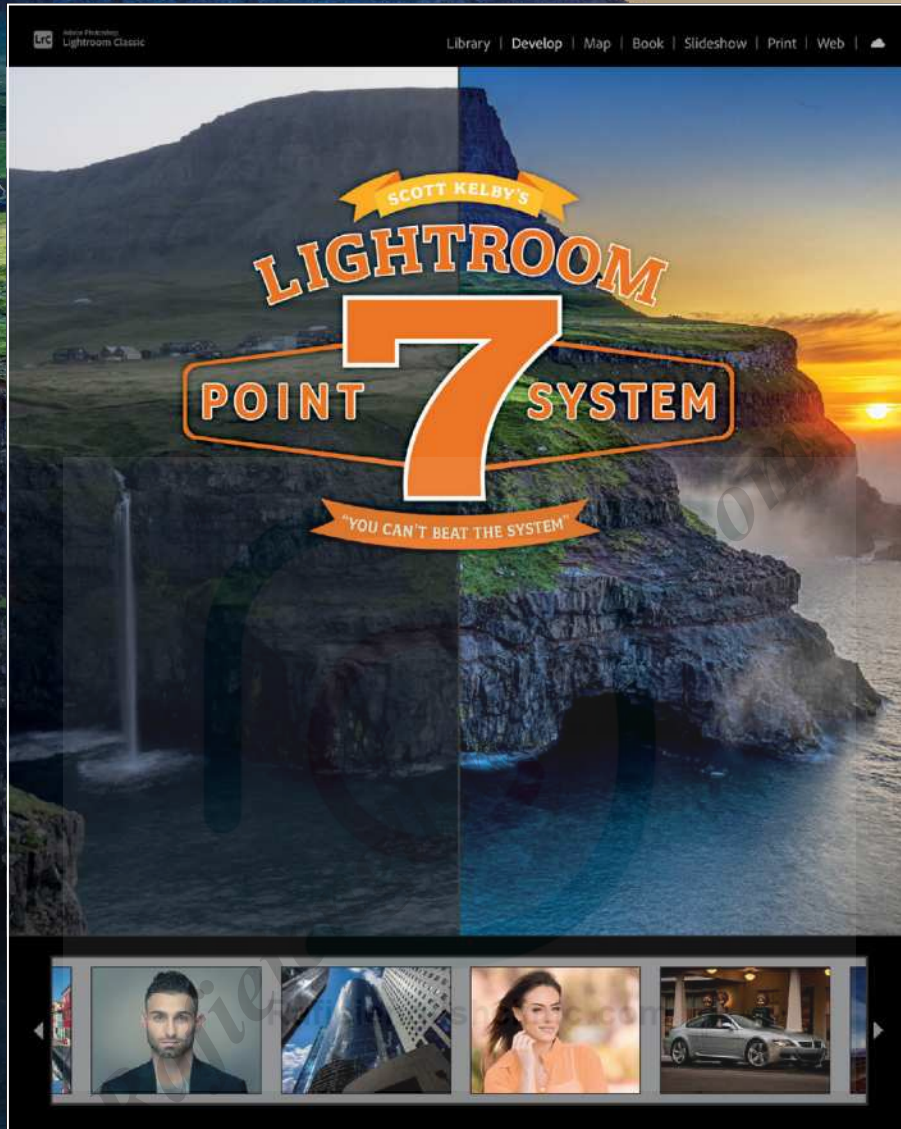
 Questions & Comments



CommunityLIVE Album Cover
March 2021

Fernando Santos

TAKE YOUR IMAGES FROM FLAT TO FABULOUS



Get ready to learn “The System” crafted by world-renowned Lightroom expert Scott Kelby. This is a new way of working and thinking about editing your images that will change the way you work in Lightroom forever, so you’ll spend less time fixing your photos and more time finishing them, and doing the fun, creative things that make Lightroom the amazing tool that it is. This isn’t a “read about it” book. This is a hands-on “you do it” book. You start each lesson with the RAW photo, right out of the camera (you can download Scott’s images, so you can follow right along). Then, you’re going to apply the 7-Point System, until these seven points are absolutely second nature to you. Once you learn this system, there won’t be an image on your screen that you won’t be able to enhance, fix, edit, and finish like a pro! This is the book you’ve been waiting for—the industry has been waiting for—and once you learn this system and start applying it yourself, you’ll be the next one to say, “You can’t beat the system!”



PIXEL STRETCH DESIGN EFFECTS

You've no doubt seen this effect before and there are certainly a number of ways to achieve it. Using a small part of an image, you can create a variety of stretched effects that can be used for background and even custom text, if you feel so inclined. Here we'll create a background effect for a commercial sports image.



STEP ONE: The stretch effect often uses parts of the main subject, but sometimes the subject doesn't work well for the effect, or perhaps you want to use something with different colors altogether. In this case, keeping with the sports theme, we'll use a sneaker to create the effect. Here we have a collection of colorful sneakers that gives us a variety from which to choose. Once the effect is done, you'll see how you can create abstract elements like this from just about any image.

If you'd like to download the low-res watermarked version of this image to follow along, [click this link](#), log in with your Adobe ID, and click the Download Preview button.

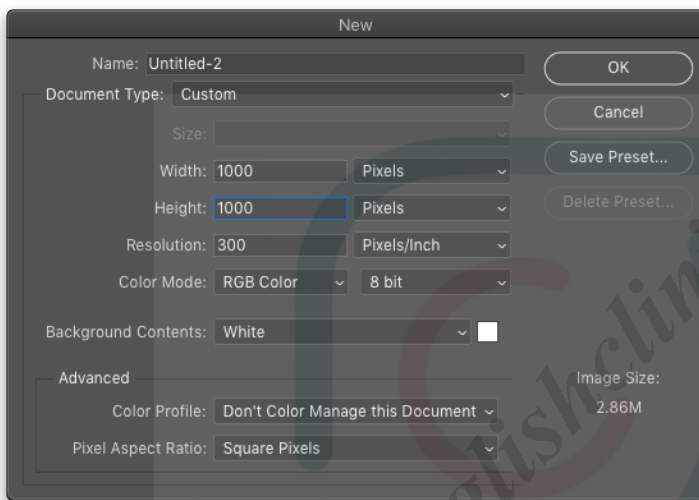


©Arabee Stock/MarySan

In Photoshop, go to File>Open, navigate to the downloaded file, and click Open. Make sure the Resolution is set to 300 ppi in the Rasterize EPS Format, and click OK to open it in Photoshop.



STEP TWO: Select the Lasso tool (L) in the Toolbar and draw a loose selection around the pink and purple shoe, as you see here. Press Command-C (PC: Ctrl-C) to copy the selection to the clipboard.

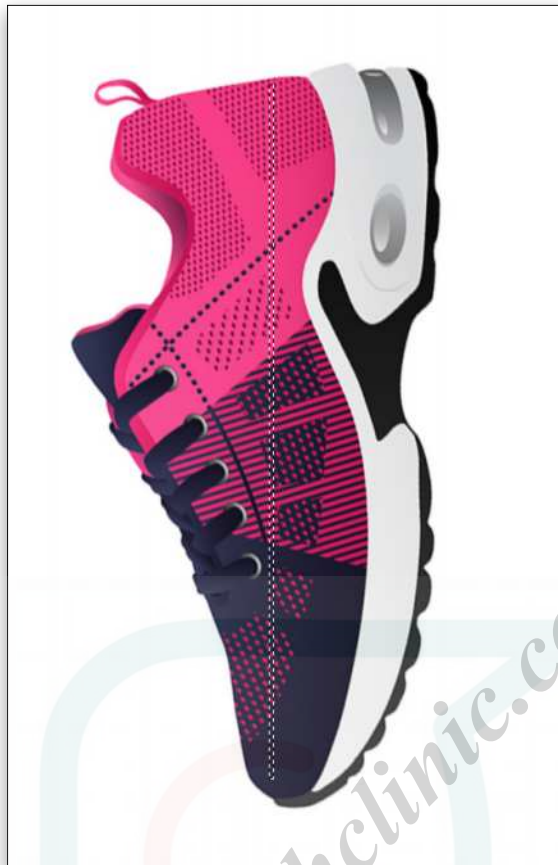


STEP THREE: Press Command-N (PC: Ctrl-N) to create a new document. Set both the Width and Height to 1000 pixels, the Resolution to 300 ppi, the Color Mode to RGB Color, Background Contents to White, and click OK.

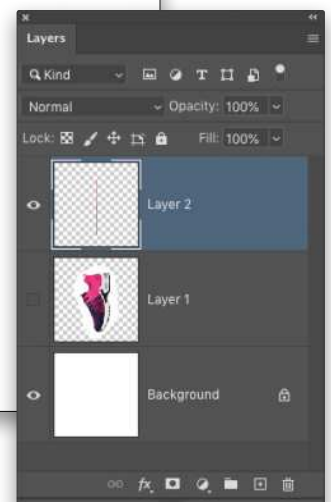
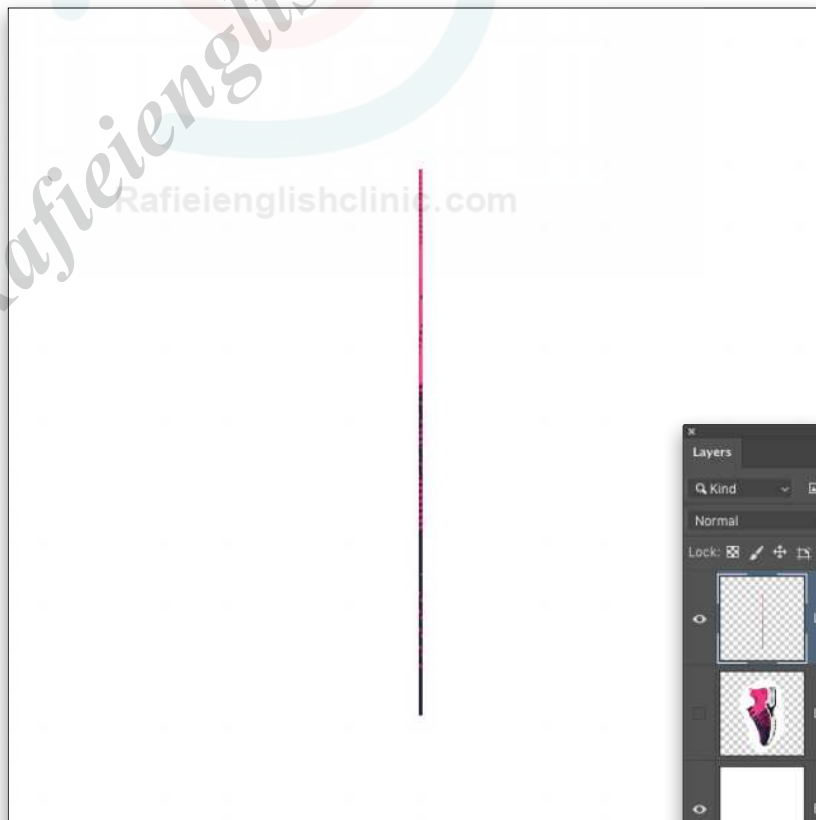


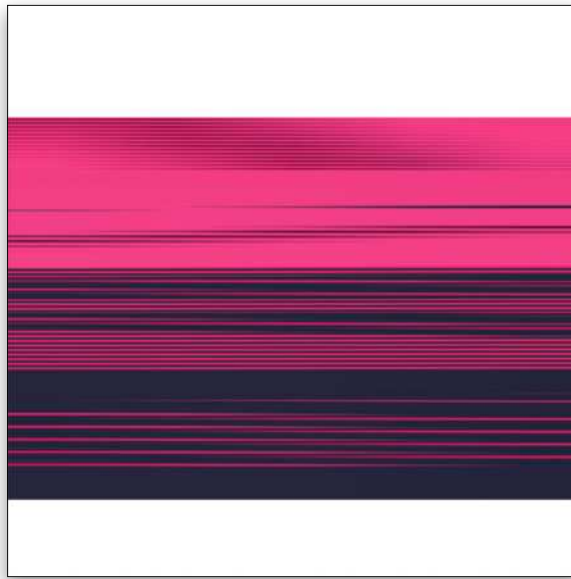
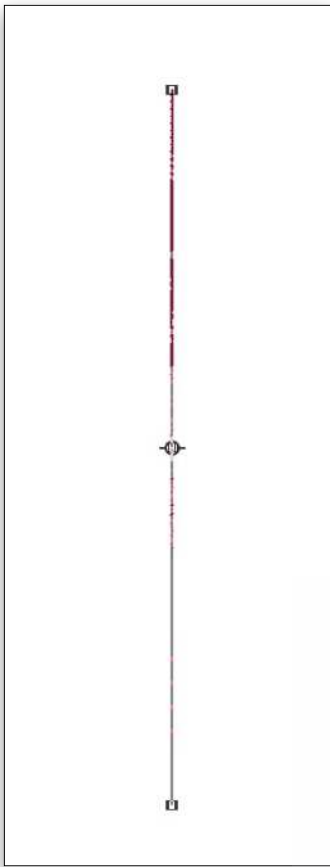
STEP FOUR: Press Command-V (PC: Ctrl-V) to paste the copied shoe into the new canvas. It will automatically create a new layer in the Layers panel. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to activate Free Transform, and rotate the shoe counterclockwise so it's fully vertical. Resize it and position it on the canvas as shown here. Press Enter when done.

STEP FIVE: Select the Rectangular Marquee tool (M) in the Toolbar. Starting at the top middle of the shoe in the pink area, draw a very thin vertical selection down the long axis. Here we're making sure to include various colors and shapes from the sneaker. You can press-and-hold the Spacebar to reposition the selection while you're drawing it, or you can use the Arrow keys after you complete the selection to nudge it into place.



STEP SIX: Once the selection is complete, press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to copy the selected area to a new layer. Turn off the original shoe layer below by clicking its Eye icon in the Layers panel, and you'll see just the thin sliver of the shoe that's been extracted.



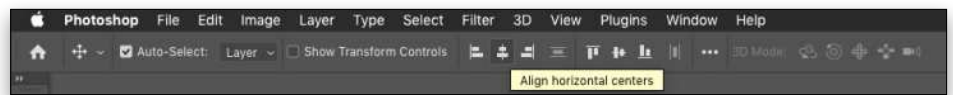


STEP SEVEN: Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) again to activate Free Transform. Hold down Shift-Option (PC: Shift-Alt) to transform from the center outward without maintaining proportions, and drag the right-middle control point to the edge of the canvas. Once the object fills the width of the document, press Enter. You'll see the stretch effect already taking shape.

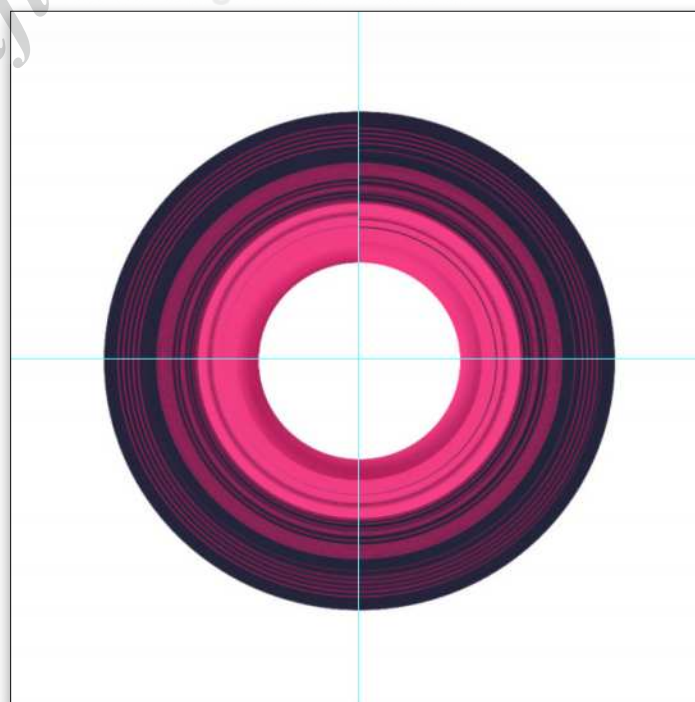
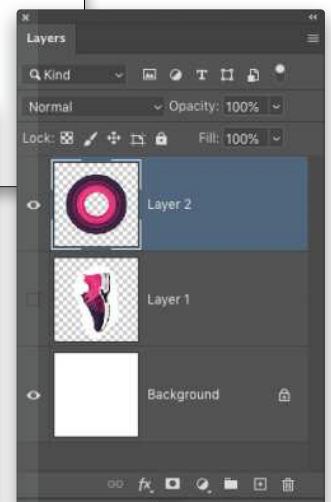


STEP EIGHT: It's a little too tall because the initial selection was rather long to get all the various colors of the shoe, but let's scale it down vertically. Press command-T (PC: Ctrl-T), hold Shift-Option (PC: Shift-Alt) again, and this time drag the top-middle control point down to squash the shape a little bit. Press Enter.

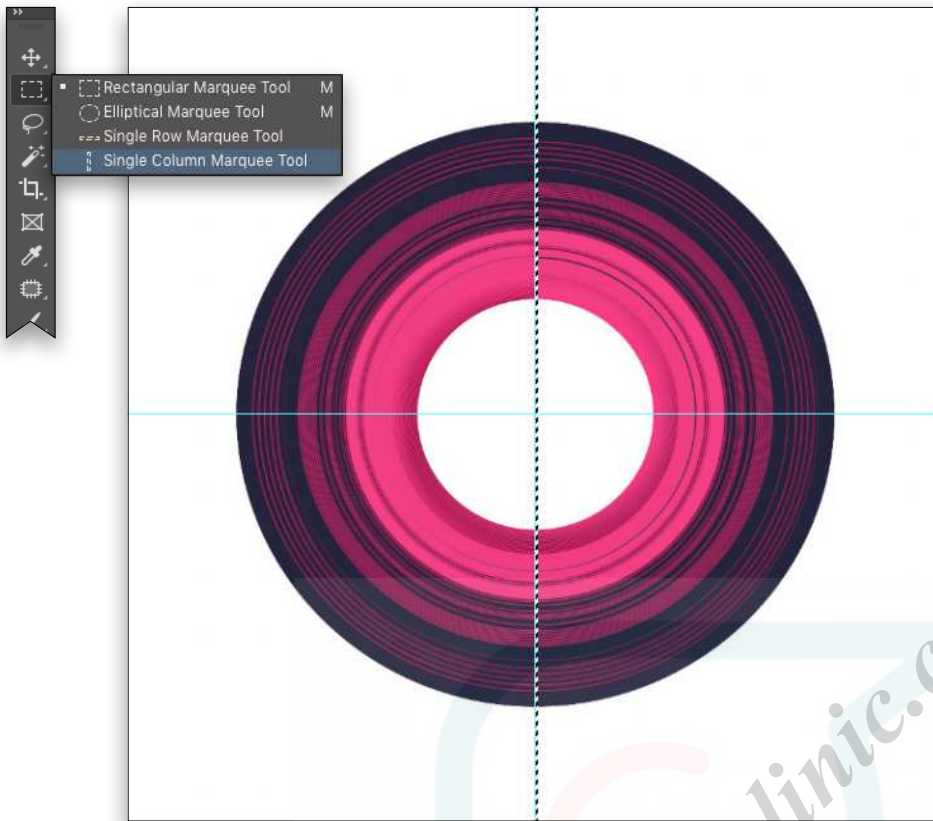
STEP NINE: Before moving on, let's make sure the object is centered in the canvas area. Press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to select the entire canvas, switch to the Move tool (V), and then click the Align Horizontal Centers icon and the Align Vertical Centers icon in the Options Bar. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect.



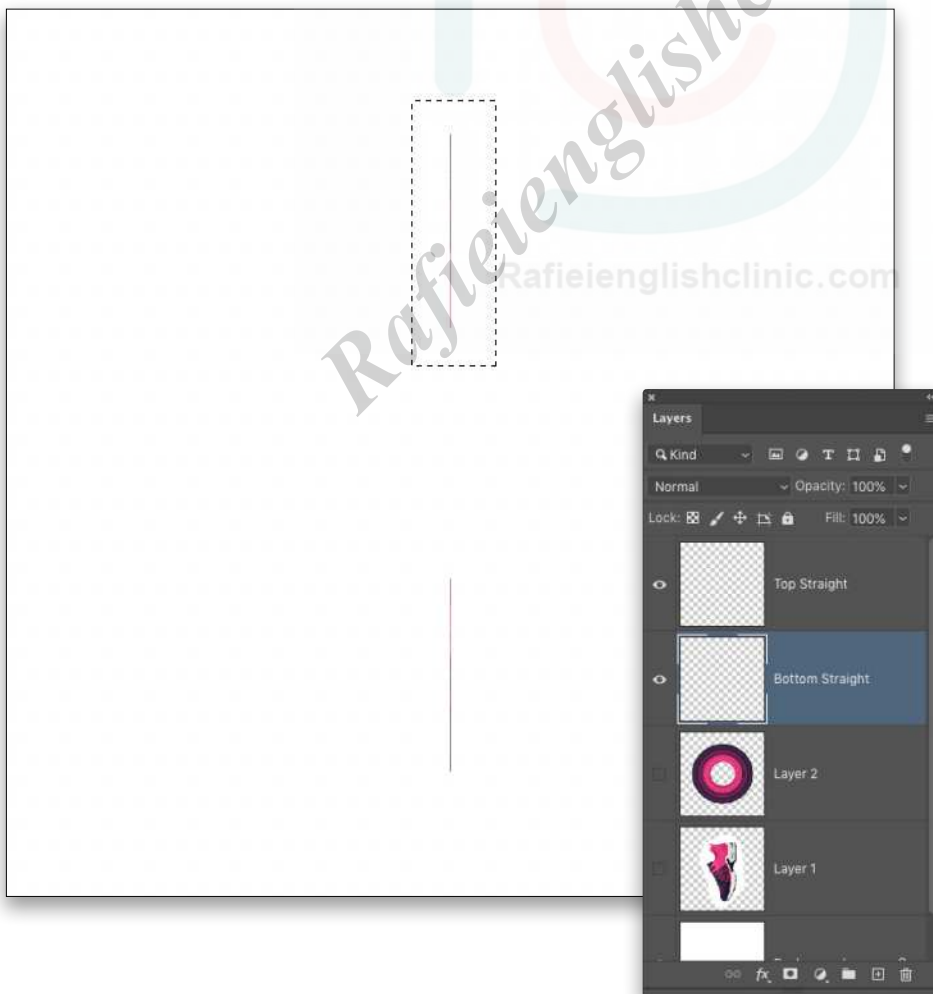
STEP 10: Go under the Filter menu, to Distort, and choose Polar Coordinates. Make sure it's set to Rectangular to Polar, and click OK. This will transform the stretched colors into a ring shape. You can see at the top where the lines don't line up but that's to be expected. We'll cleverly hide that in a moment.



STEP 11: Press Command-R (PC: Ctrl-R) to turn on the rulers. Click on the vertical ruler and drag out a guide until it snaps to the center (if it doesn't snap, make sure View>Snap is turned on). Drag a guide from the top horizontal ruler, as well, until it snaps to the center.



STEP 12: In the Toolbar, click-and-hold on the Rectangular Marquee tool and choose the Single Column Marquee tool. Click just to the right of the vertical guide to add the selection, and then drag it close to the guide until it snaps to it (you might have to zoom in). Make sure the selection is on the right side of the guide.



STEP 13: Press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to copy the selected areas to a new layer. If you turn off the circle layer, you'll see just two thin vertical pieces. These need to be on separate layers so use the Rectangular Marquee tool to draw a selection around the top line and press Shift-Command-J (PC: Shift-Ctrl-J) to cut the selection to a new layer. Since they're so small, it's hard to tell which layer is which in the Layers panel, so rename them like we did here to make it easier to identify them. Simply double-click a layer's name to rename it.

STEP 14: Turn the circle layer back on, click on the Top Straight layer in the Layers panel to make it active, and press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to activate Free Transform. Hold the Shift key, grab the left-middle control handle, and drag it left a little ways past the canvas edge. Press Enter when done.

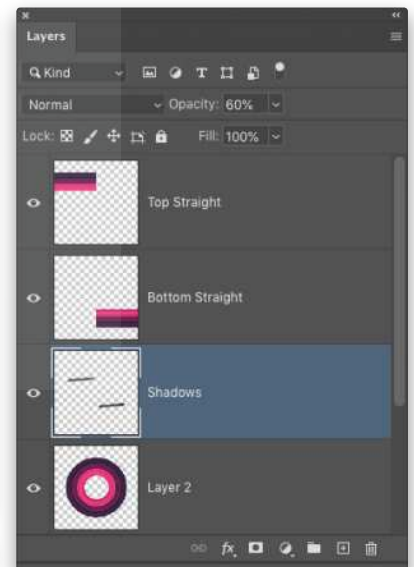


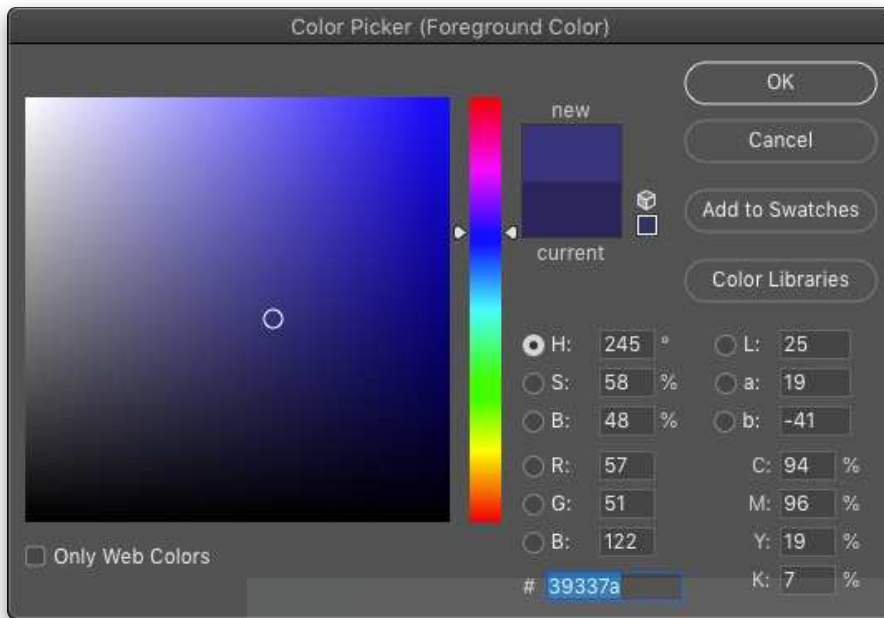
STEP 15: Now select the Bottom Straight layer and do the same thing, but this time stretch it to the right a little ways past the canvas edge. Press Enter.



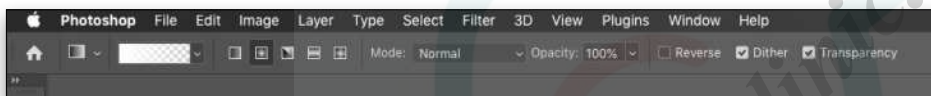
STEP 16: Create a new layer, name it "Shadows," and place it below the two straight layers and above the main circle layer in the Layers panel. Hold down the Command (PC: Ctrl) key and click on the thumbnail of the circle layer to load the shape as a selection.

Select the Brush tool (B), set it to a small Soft Round brush in the Brush Preset Picker in the Options Bar, and press D to set the Foreground color to black. Paint a very narrow shadow line behind each horizontal shape. *Tip:* Click once with the brush at the starting point, and Shift-click the ending point to paint a straight line between the two points. Lower the layer Opacity to around 60%. This shadow effect is optional but does create a little bit of depth between the objects. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to deselect.

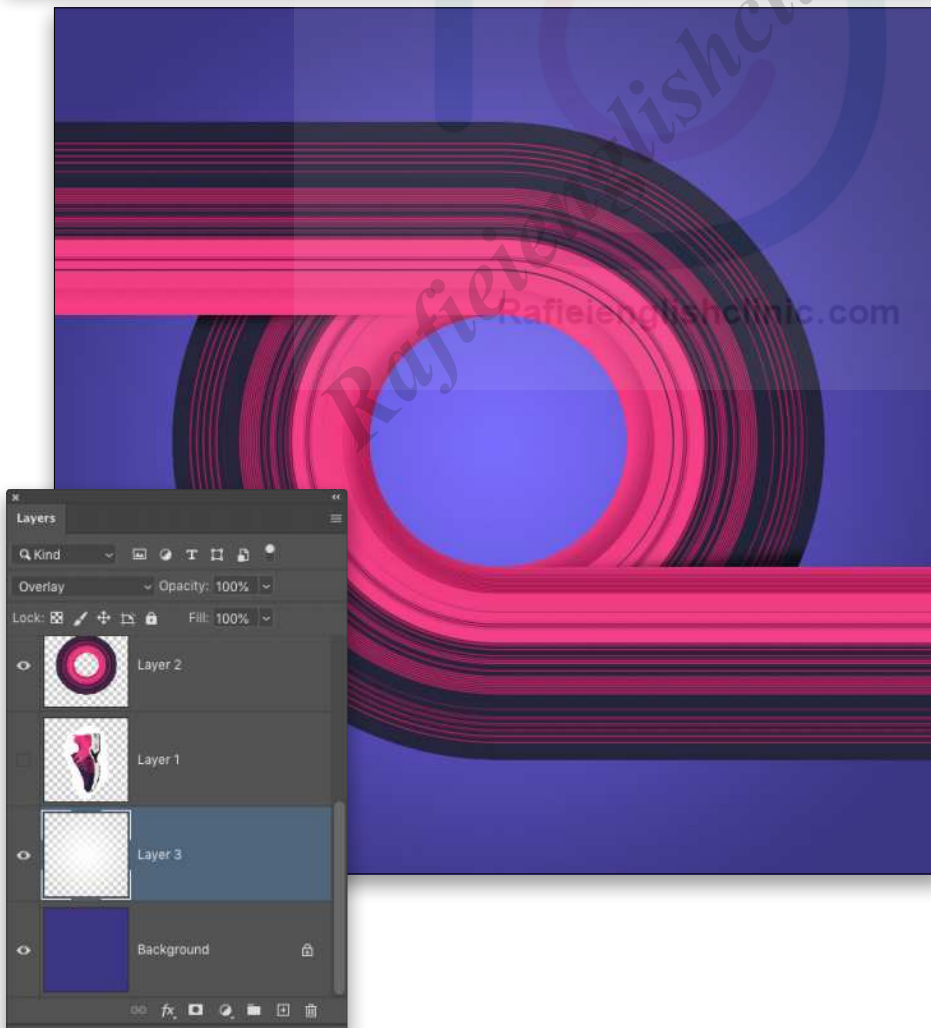




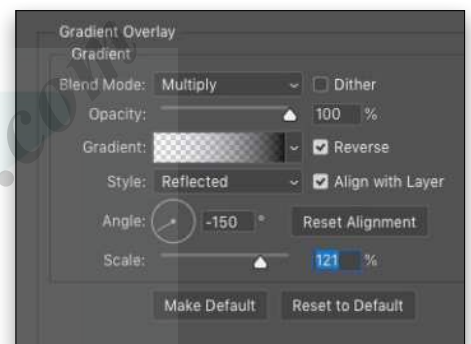
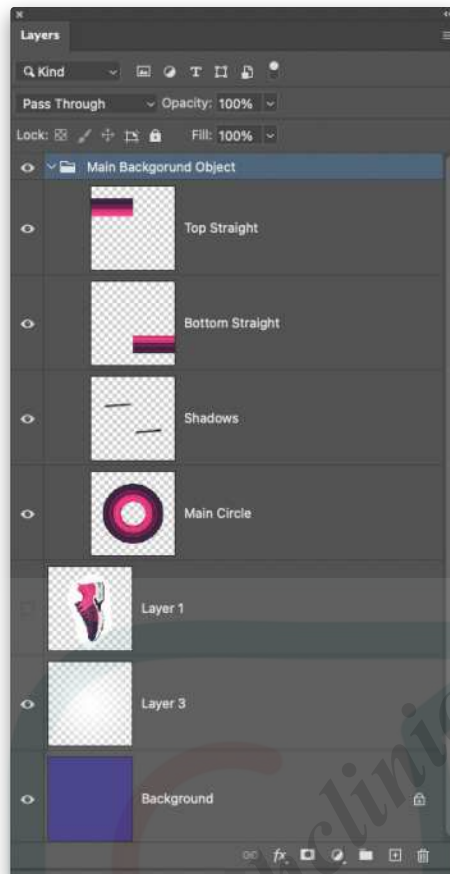
STEP 17: Click on the Background layer in the Layers panel to make it active. Click on the Foreground color swatch near the bottom of the Toolbar to open the Color Picker. Choose a color to go along with the color scheme of your stretch effect (we're using a simple purple). Click OK to close the Color Picker, and press Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace) to fill the Background layer with that color.



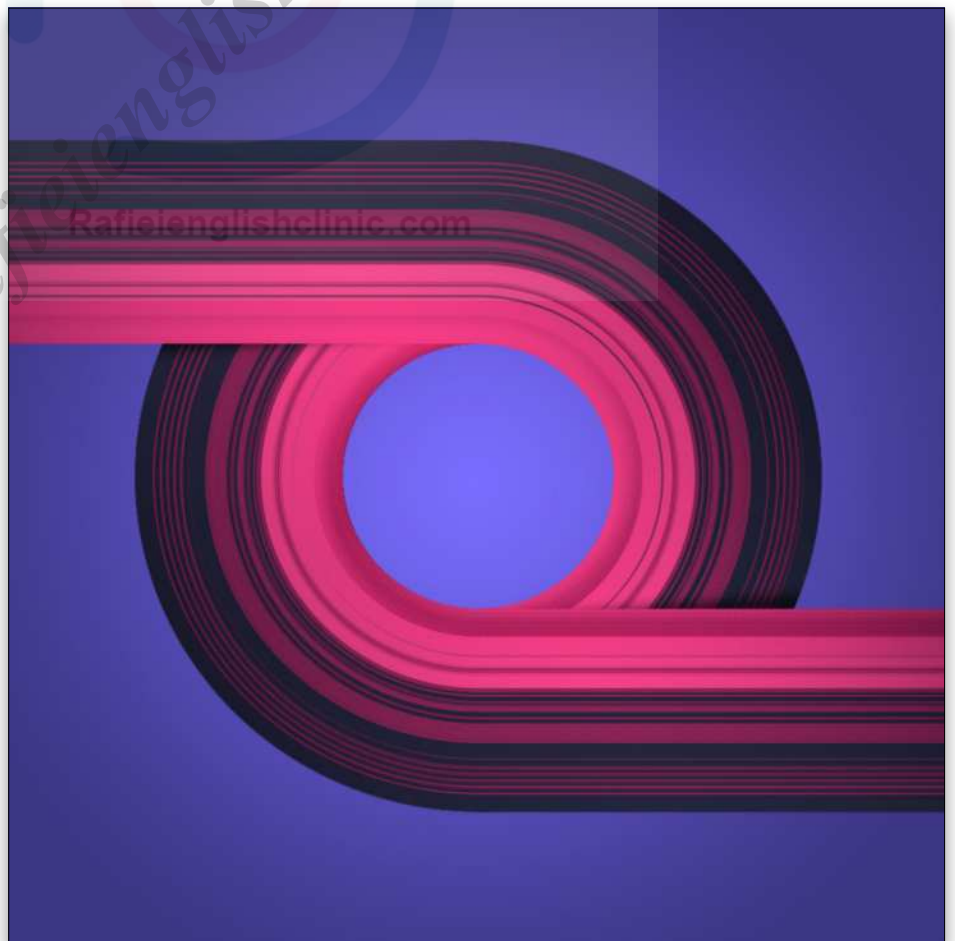
STEP 18: This is an old trick I use out of habit now that creates a nice gradient vignette effect. Create a new layer above the Background layer, and choose the Gradient tool (G) in the Toolbar. In the Options Bar, click the gradient preview strip, choose the Foreground to Transparent gradient preset in the Basics set in the Gradient Editor, and click OK. Select the Radial Gradient icon in the Options Bar. Press D then X to set the Foreground color to white. Draw a gradient starting at the center of the canvas out to one of the corners. Change the layer blend mode to Overlay. If the gradient is too intense just dial down the layer Opacity.

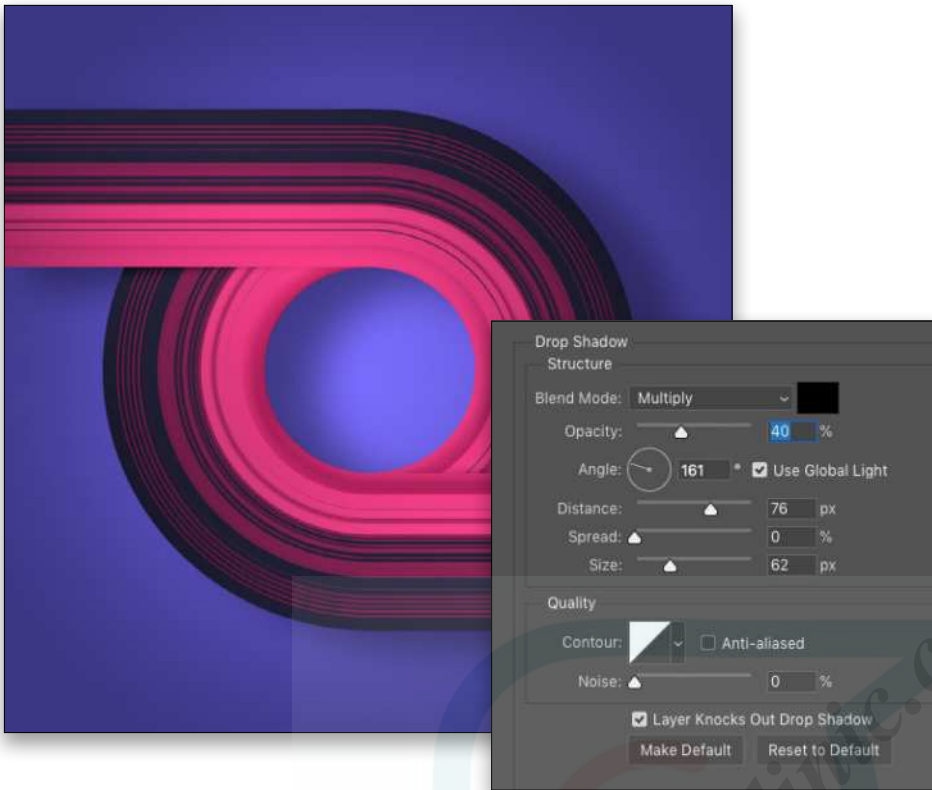


STEP 19: In the Layers panel, click on the Top Straight layer at the top of the layer stack, and Shift-click the circle layer to select all of the layers that make up the stretched shape, including the Shadows layer. Press Command-G (PC: Ctrl-G) to place the layers in a layer group folder, and rename the group "Main Background Object."



STEP 20: Putting these elements in a group allows us to apply layer styles to the overall shape without merging them. With the group active in the Layers panel, start by pressing D to set the Foreground color to black. Click on the Add a Layer Style icon (fx) at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Gradient Overlay. Click on the Gradient strip, select the Foreground to Transparent gradient in the Basics set in the Gradient Editor, and click OK to close the Gradient Editor. Check on Reverse, and set the Blend Mode to Multiply, the Style drop-down menu to Reflected, and the Angle to -150° . This creates a light effect on the shape. You can manually move the gradient by clicking-and-dragging directly on the image, and then increase or decrease the Scale of the gradient depending on how focused you want the light effect to be. Don't click OK yet.





STEP 21: Click on the words “Drop Shadow” in the list of effects on the left side of the Layer Style dialog to activate it and access its settings. You can experiment with these settings to get different results but the settings shown here create a soft shadow that provides a sense of depth without being too harsh. Click OK when done.

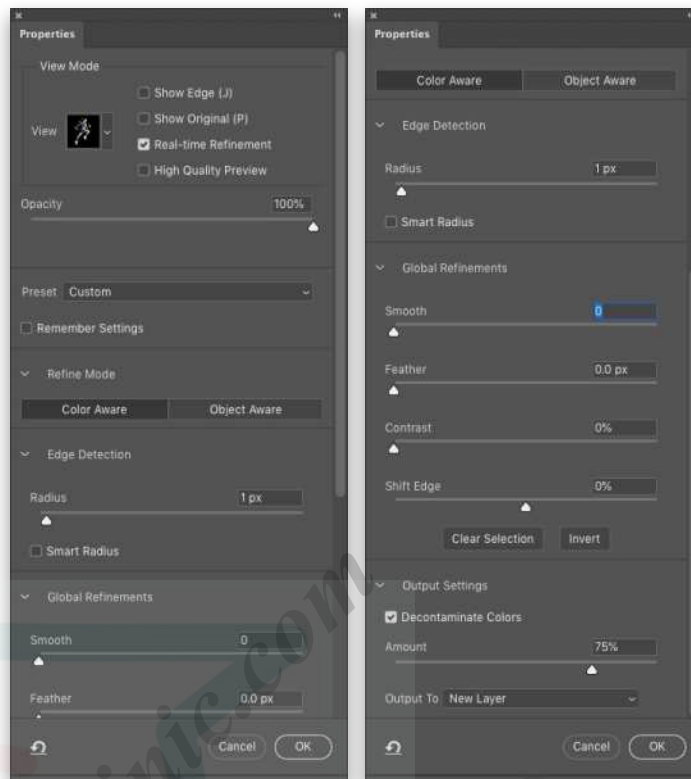
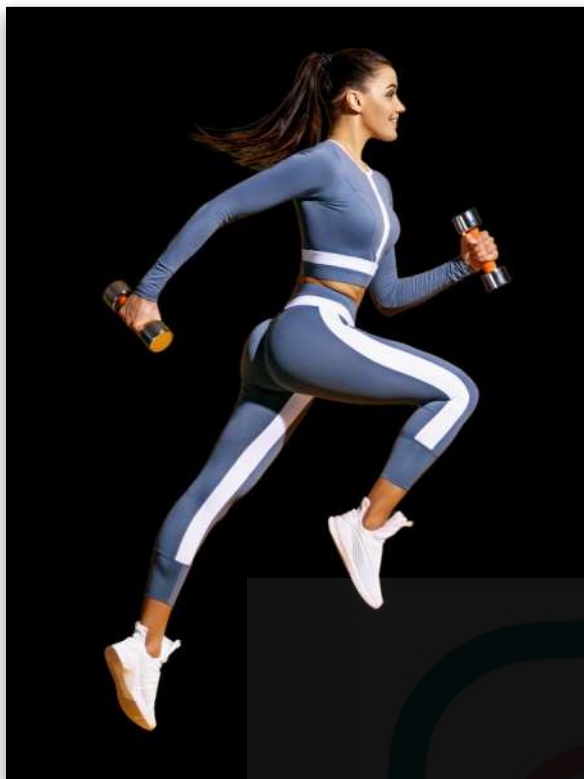
STEP 22: Now let’s add our main subject. Here we have a nice shot of a workout girl in a midair pose. She’s on a yellow background, which is reflected on some of her clothing. This could be an issue and the colors could clash a little with our main design but we’ll address that in a moment. First, let’s extract her from the background.

If you’d like to download the low-res watermarked versions of this image to follow along, [click this link](#), log in with your Adobe ID, and click the Save to Library button. Right-click the image in the Libraries panel (Window>Libraries) and choose Edit to open it in Photoshop.

To make it easier to work with the image, increase the resolution of the practice file. (We normally don’t recommend enlarging images, but this is only for practice purposes.) Go to Image>Image Size, turn on the Resample checkbox, select Preserve Details 2.0 from the Resample drop-down menu, set the Width to 2,000 pixels, and click OK.

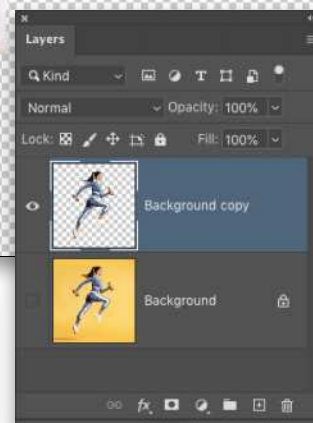
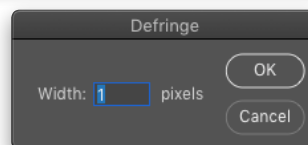
Once your image is open, go under the Select menu and choose Subject.



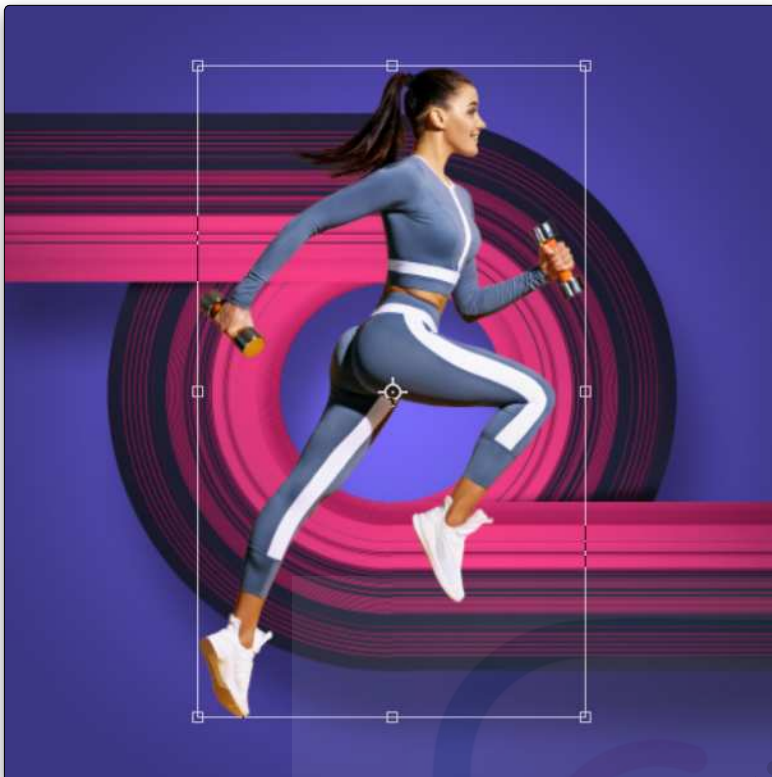


STEP 23: Click the Select and Mask button in the Options Bar to open the refine selection features. In the Properties panel, set the View drop-down menu to On Black (A) and the Opacity to 100%. Under Edge Detection, set the Radius to 1 px. Click the Refine Hair button in the Options Bar, and then use the Refine Edge Brush tool (R) in the selection toolbar on the left to paint away any of the yellow background that might still be visible, especially around her hair. Use the Bracket keys on your keyboard to quickly change the size of the brush as needed.

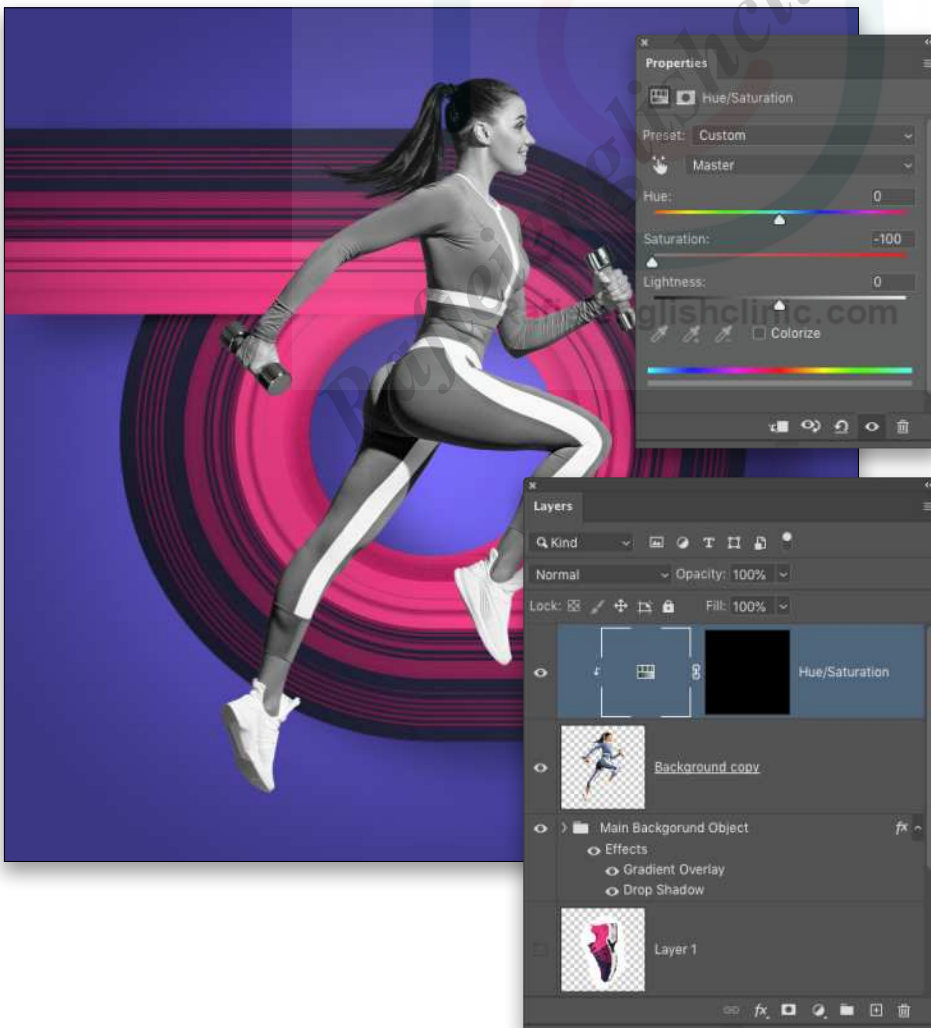
When done refining, go back to the Properties panel, scroll down to the Output Settings section, and activate Decontaminate Colors. Set the Amount to 75%. This will help with the yellow spillover on the subject from the background. Finally, set the Output To drop-down menu to New Layer and click OK.



STEP 24: Go under the Layer menu, to Matting, and select Defringe. In the Defringe dialog, set the Width to 1 pixel and click OK.

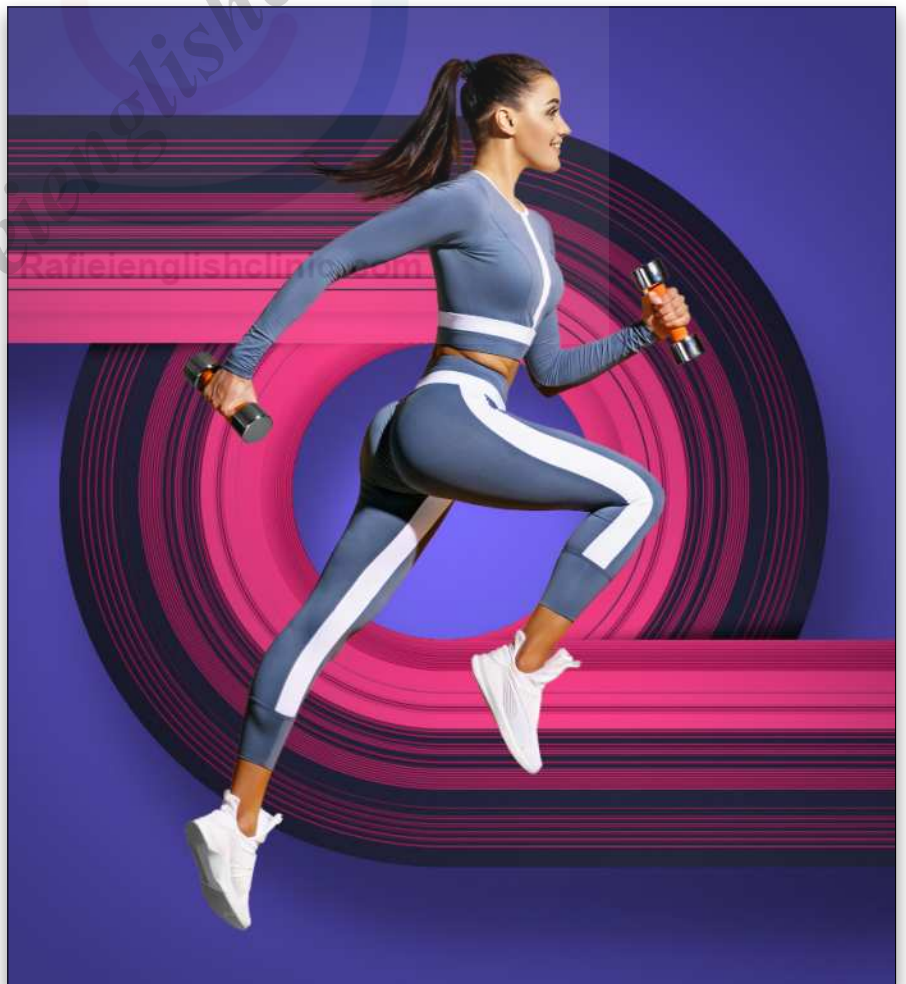


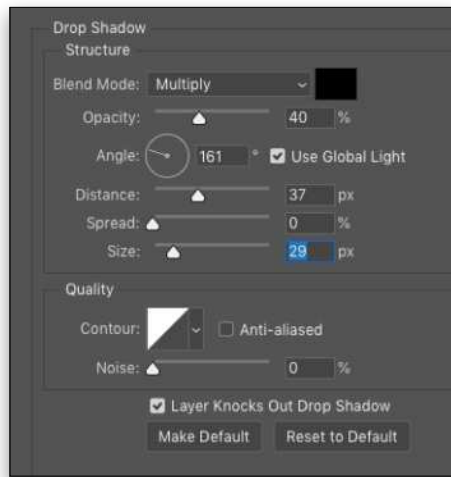
STEP 25: Even though this gave us a nice clean extraction, the original yellow background is still spilling over on some of the subject, especially on her shoes and the weights she's holding. We'll address this in a moment but let's bring the subject into the main image first. Using the Move tool (V), drag the extracted subject over to the main working file. Make sure the layer is positioned at the top of the layer stack, and then use Free Transform to resize and position her as shown here.



STEP 26: Click on the Create New Adjustment icon (half-black, half-white circle) at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Hue/Saturation. In the Properties panel (Window>Properties), set the Saturation to -100, which will desaturate the entire image. To isolate it to the main subject, just press Option-Command-G (PC: Alt-Ctrl-G) to clip the adjustment layer to the subject layer. Also, click on the layer mask thumbnail on the adjustment layer in the Layers panel, and press Command-I (PC: Ctrl-I) to invert it from white to black, which hides the entire adjustment. (The image to the left shows the effect of clipping the Hue/Saturation layer to the subject layer before inverting the layer mask.)

STEP 27: Now switch to the Brush tool (B) and choose a soft-edged round brush. With the layer mask thumbnail still active in the Layers panel, set the Foreground color to white by pressing D, and paint over the areas of the shoes and hand weights to remove the yellow cast from those parts.



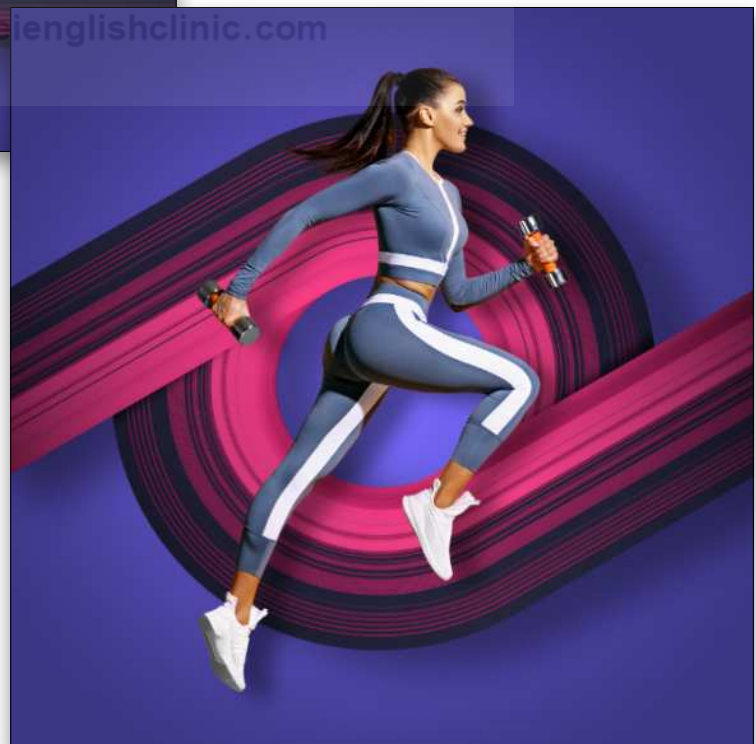
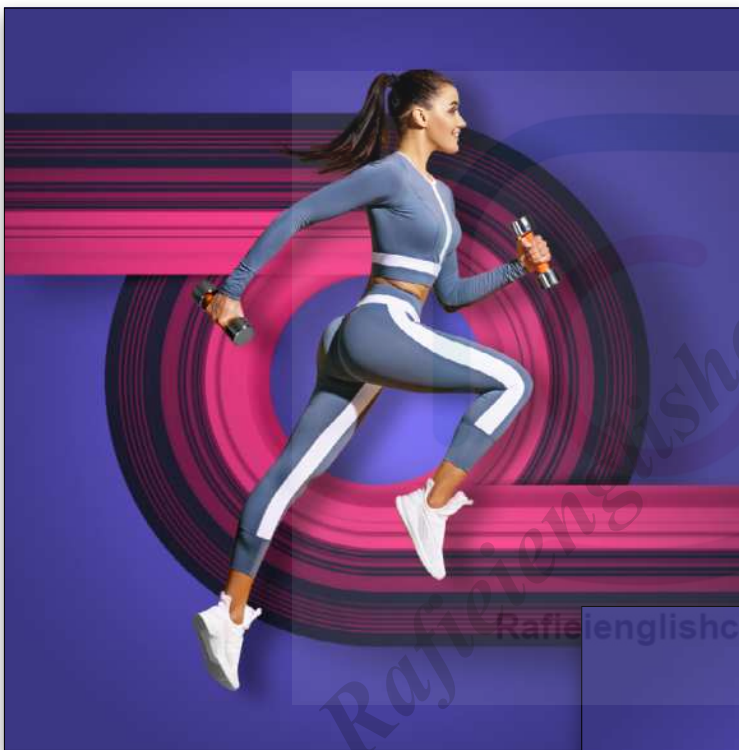


STEP 28: To finish the design, make the main subject layer active again. Add a Drop Shadow to this layer like the one we added to the background object in Step 21. Here you can see we lowered the Distance and Size to make it appear the subject is close to the background element. Make sure you leave Use Global Light checked on so that, if you change the Angle of the shadow, it will do the same to all the Drop Shadow layer styles.

Hopefully, this gives you a new way to use your images to create colorful stretched graphics like these to use as background elements for just about anything. Also, with the stretched background shape contained in a layer group, you can use Free Transform to rotate the angle depending on the subject.

Remember to always experiment with these tricks to adapt to your own projects. ■

Questions & Comments





KIRK NELSON



CRAFT A LONG EXPOSURE FIREFLY EFFECT IN PHOTOSHOP

One of the great childhood joys of summertime is finding fireflies, or lightning bugs as they may be known regionally. In an honest effort to recapture some of that same summertime bliss, photographers have created wonderfully beautiful images by using long exposure settings to capture the flights of the little electric insects. Of course, if your area doesn't have these critters, or perhaps if it's just the wrong time of year, what recourse do you have? Well, Photoshop of course!



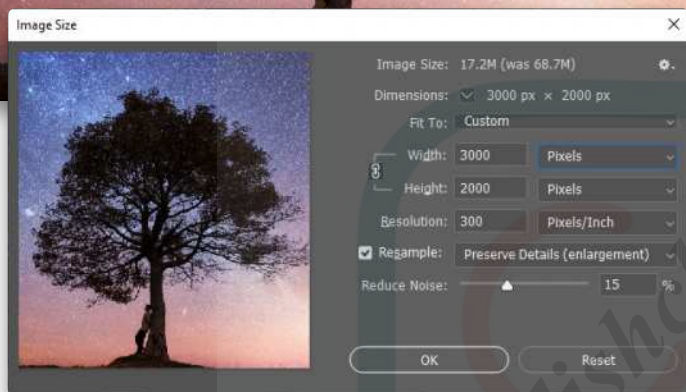
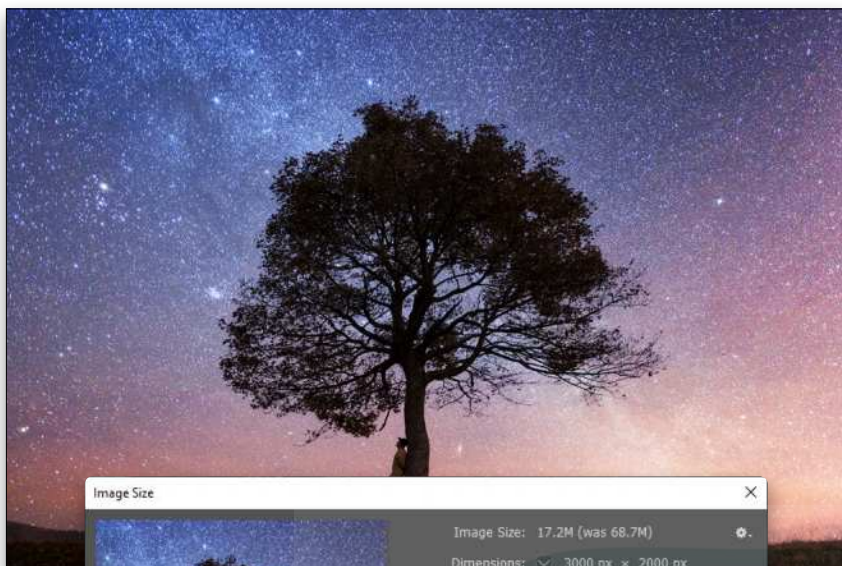
In this project, we'll explore some techniques to re-create those glowing images with a bit of brushwork and filter fun.

STEP ONE: Open an image of an evening tree. For this project, we used an Adobe Stock image. If you'd like to download the low-res watermarked version of this image to follow along, [click this link](#), log in with your Adobe

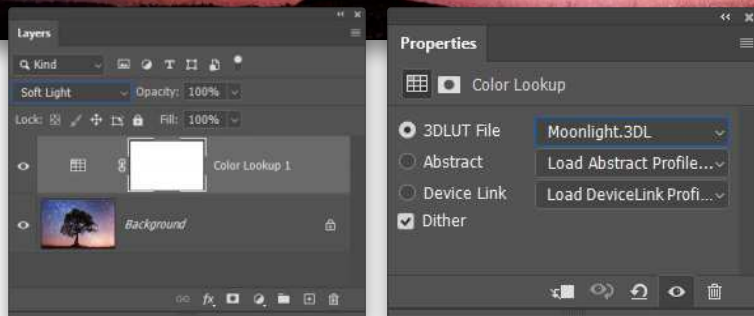
ID, and click the Save to Library button. Right-click the image in the Libraries panel (Window>Libraries) and choose Edit to open it in Photoshop.

To make it easier to work with the image, increase the resolution of the practice file. (We normally don't recommend enlarging images, but this is only for practice purposes.) Go to Image>Image Size, turn on the Resample

©Adobe Stock/van kmit

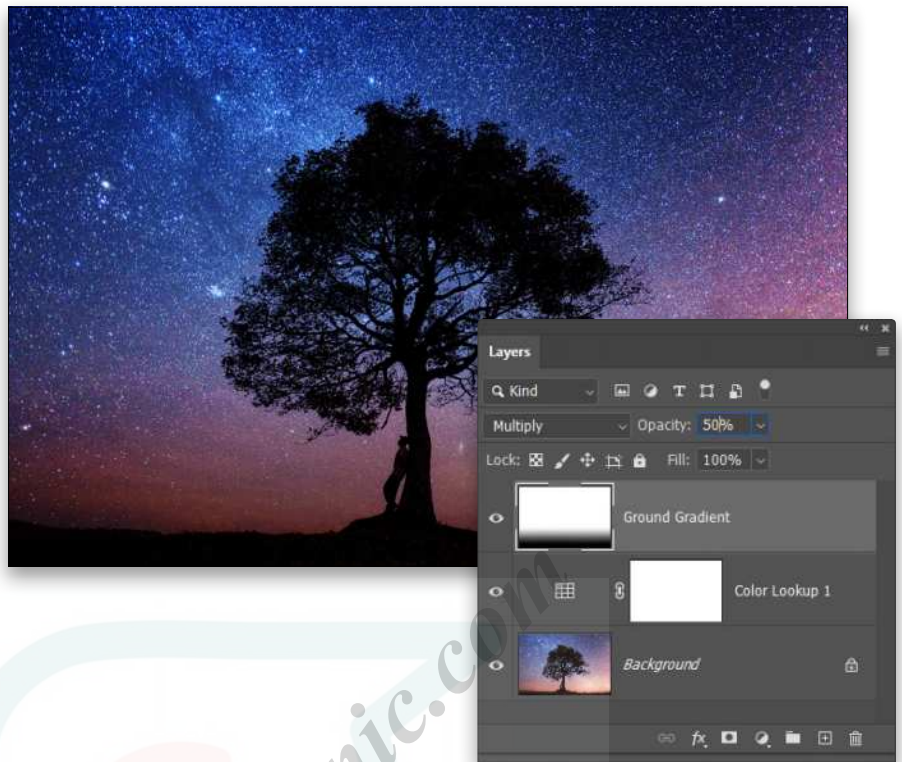


checkbox, select Preserve Details 2.0 from the Resample drop-down menu, set the Resolution to 300 ppi and the Width to 3,000 pixels, and click OK.



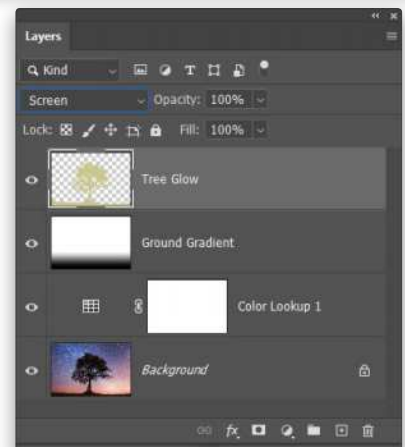
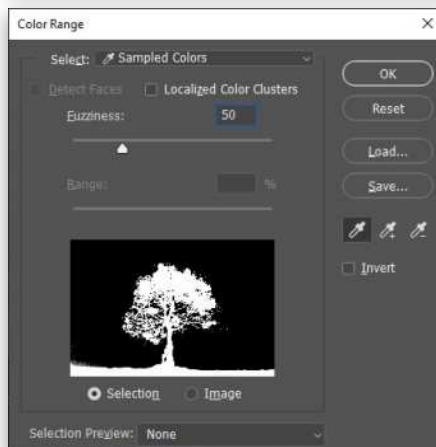
STEP TWO: Click on the Create New Adjustment Layer icon (half-black, half-white circle) at the bottom of the Layers panel and select Color Lookup. In the Properties panel (Window>Properties), set the 3DLUT File drop-down menu to Moonlight.3DL, and then set the adjustment layer's blending mode to Soft Light in the Layers panel. This will make those twilight colors more vibrant and the stars more visible.

STEP THREE: Go to Layer>New>Layer, name this new layer “Ground Gradient,” set the blending Mode to Multiply, and click OK. Grab the Gradient tool (G); click on the gradient preview thumbnail in the Options Bar to open the Gradient Editor; select the Black, White preset in the Basics set; and click OK to close the Gradient Editor. Select the Linear Gradient icon in the Options Bar, and drag the gradient up from the ground to the top of the tree trunk. Then, reduce the layer’s Opacity to 50%.



STEP FOUR: Create another new layer, name it “Tree Glow,” and set its blending mode to Screen. Go to Select>Color Range, and click on the tree in the document to select the dark tree shape. You should see the tree in white on a black background in the preview area of the Color Range dialog. Adjust the Fuzziness slider to select more of the tree.

After clicking OK to create the selection, click on the Foreground color swatch near the bottom of the Toolbar, select a pale yellow (#cbc68a) in the Color Picker, and click OK. Then hold down the Option key and press Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace) to fill the selection with the Foreground color. Press Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D) to cancel the selection.

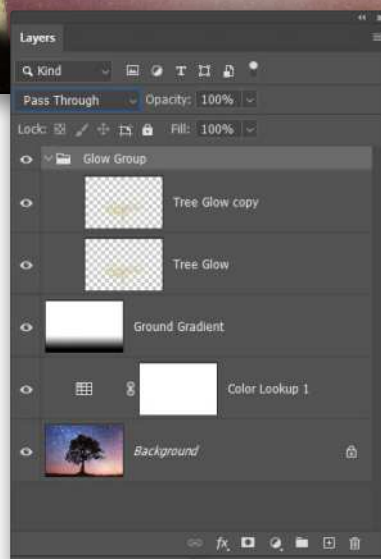
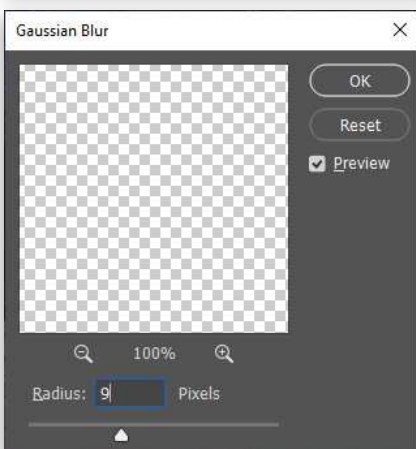




STEP FIVE: Grab the Eraser tool (E), and in the Options Bar, set the Mode to Brush, and select a large Soft Round brush tip. Erase the yellow on the ground area, the top half of the tree branches, and the person leaning against the tree. Usually, a destructive tool like the Eraser is avoided as best practice, but in this case, it would be a simple matter to repeat the steps to get these pixels back, so no worries! Erase with confidence.



STEP SIX: Press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J) to duplicate the Tree Glow layer. On the original Tree Glow layer, go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, use a Radius of 9 pixels to add a soft blur to the yellow glow, and click OK. Reduce the layer Opacity to 50% to soften the effect even further. Hold the Shift key, click on the Tree Glow copy layer to select both glow layers in the Layers panel, and press Command-G (PC: Ctrl-G) to group them. Double-click the name of the group in the Layers panel, and rename it "Glow Group."

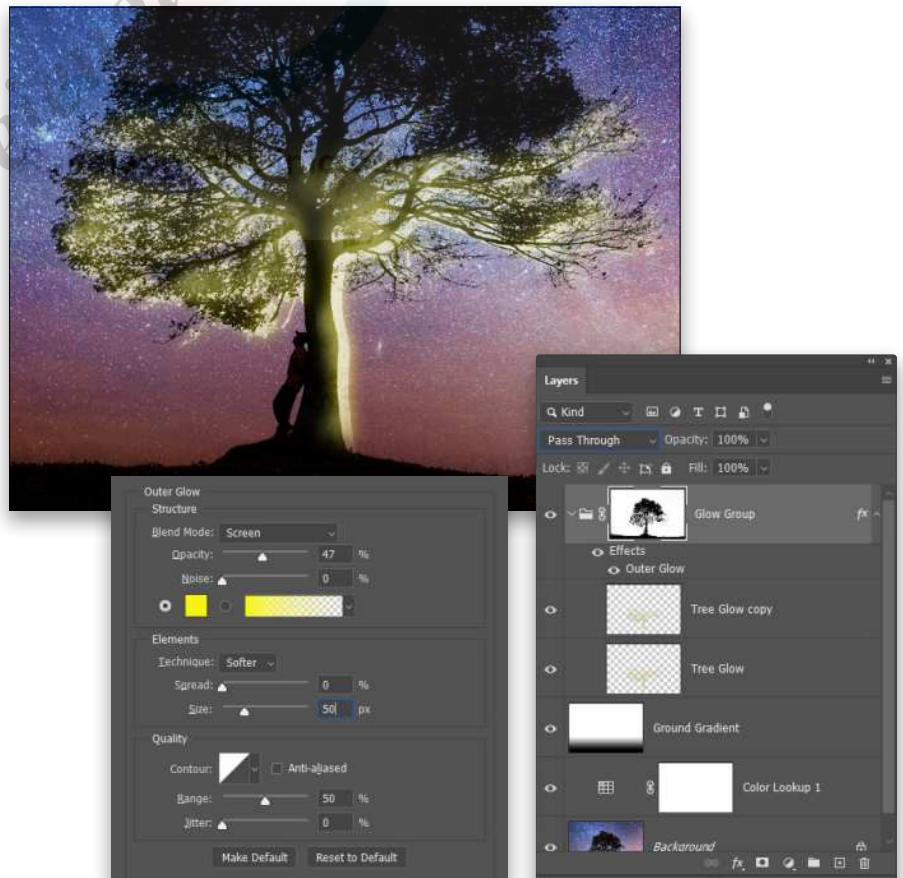


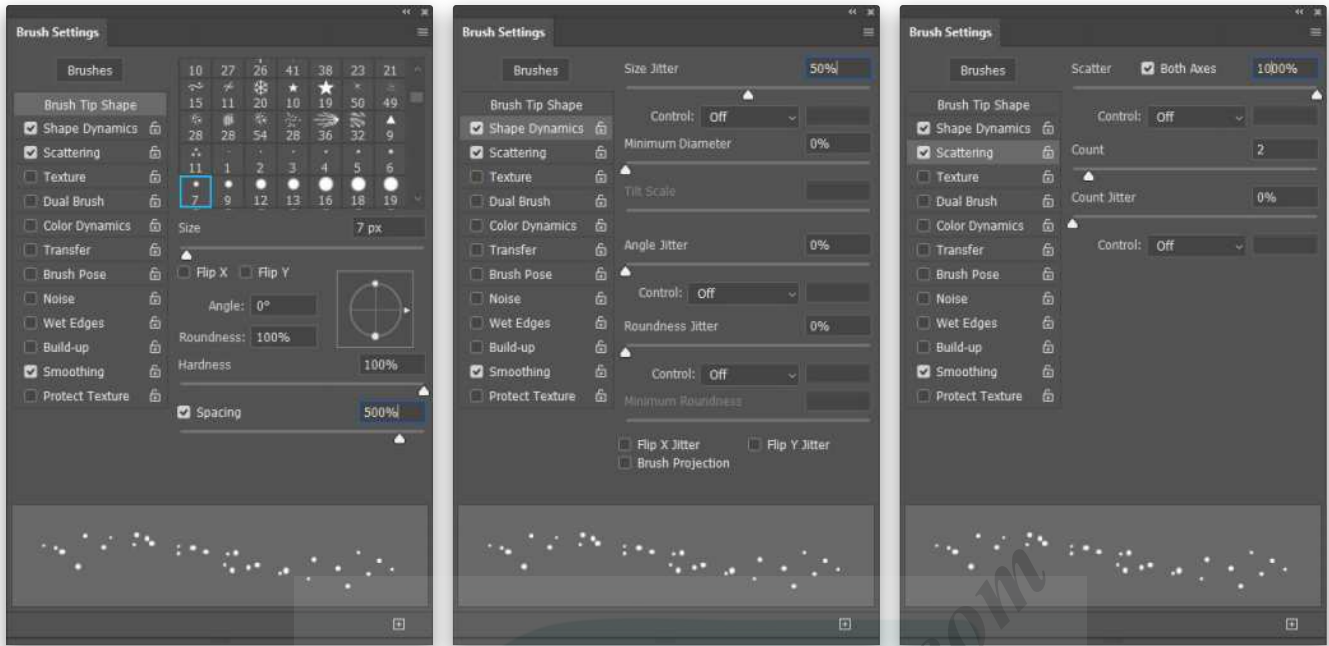
STEP SEVEN: Using the Move tool (V), click-and-drag in the image to move the Glow Group slightly down and to the right of the actual tree shape. Momentarily hide the group by clicking its Eye icon in the Layers panel, then use the same Select>Color Range operation as before to select the tree shape.

Reveal the Glow Group again, hold down the Option (PC: Alt) key, and click the Add Layer Mask icon (circle in a square) at the bottom of the Layers panel to use the selection as an inverted mask on the group. If desired, touch up a bit of the mask by using the Brush tool (B) set to a soft round brush, with the Foreground color set to black (press X), and a low Opacity in the Options Bar just so it looks a little more organic, and not quite so mechanical in the application.



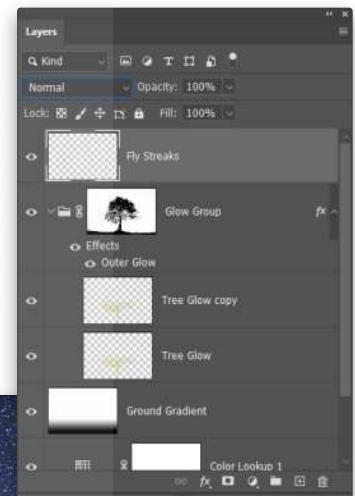
STEP EIGHT: Now add a layer style by clicking the fx icon at the bottom of the Layers panel and selecting Outer Glow. Set the Blend Mode to Screen, Opacity to 47%, Technique to Softer, Spread to 0%, and Size to 50 px. Click the color swatch, select a bright yellow (#f8f50f), and click OK to close the Color Picker. In the Quality section, set the Range to 50%, and click OK.



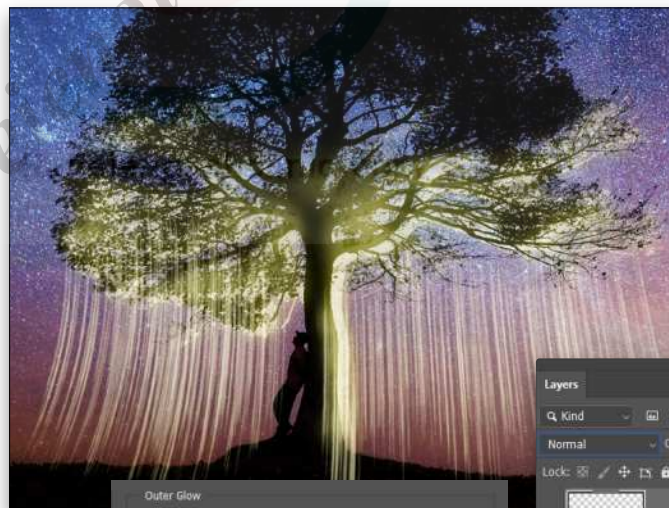
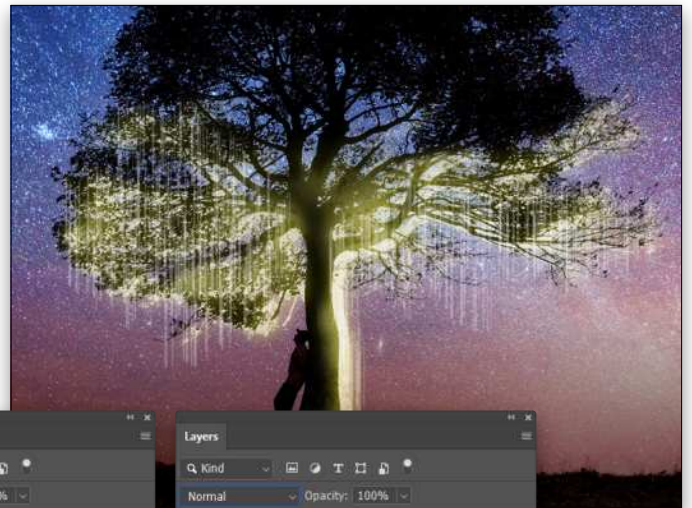
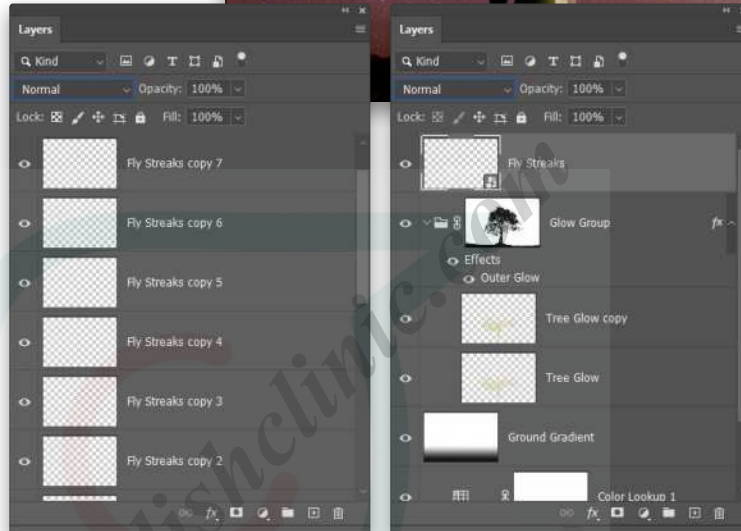
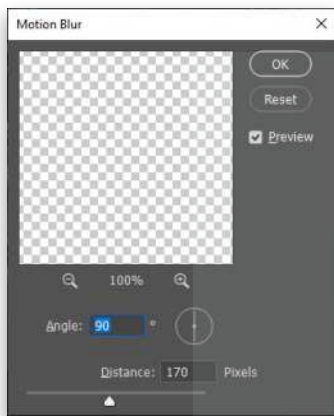


STEP NINE: Create another new layer at the top of the layer stack and name this one "Fly Streaks" (be careful the new layer doesn't accidentally get included in the Glow Group). Grab the Brush tool and open the Brush Settings panel (Window>Brush Settings). Start with the basic Hard Round Brush, and change the Size to 7 px and the Spacing to 500%. Enable Shape Dynamics on the left, and set the Size Jitter to 50%. Enable Scattering, set the Scatter to 1000%, check the option for Both Axes, and set the Count to 2. Finally, turn on the Smoothing option on the left.

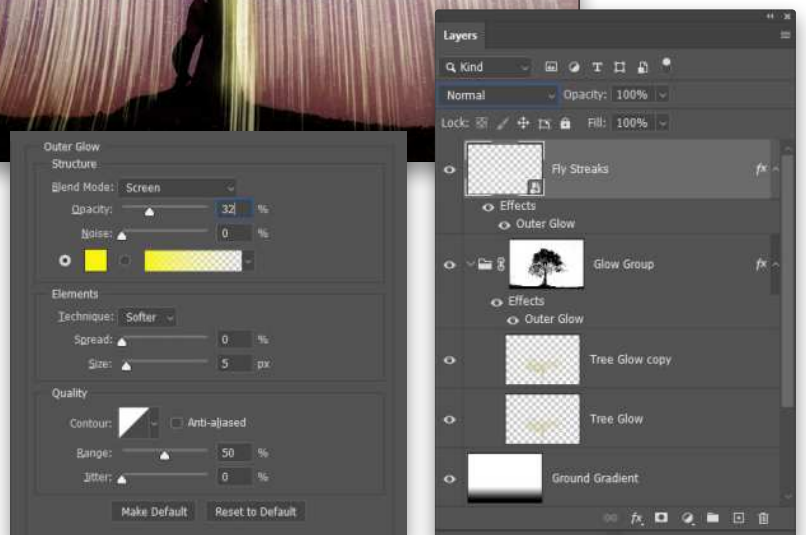
With this fun new firefly brush, press D then X to set the paint color to white, make sure the Opacity is at 100% in the Options Bar, and paint strokes along the right side of the tree trunk and along the bottom tree branches.

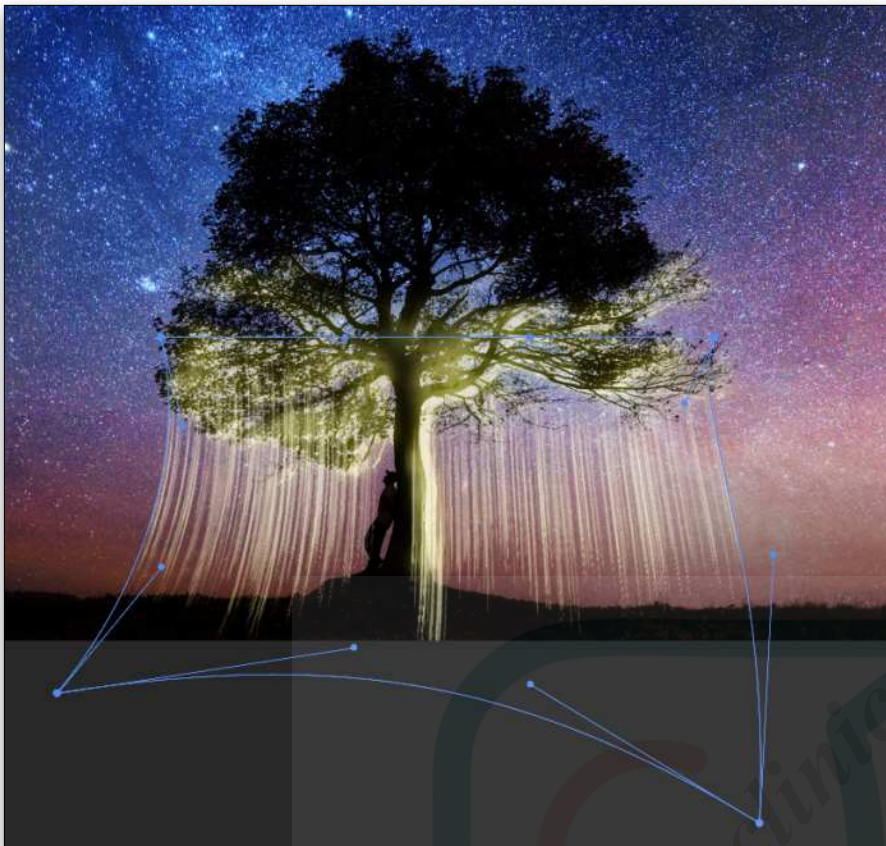


STEP 10: Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur, and set the Angle to 90° and the Distance to 170 Pixels. After clicking OK to apply the Motion Blur, duplicate the layer eight or nine times to really make the streaks bright and visible. Shift-select all the streak layers in the Layers panel and go to Layer>Smart Objects>Convert to Smart Object. Rename the layer to just “Fly Streaks” again. Use the Move tool to drag the streaks down so they don’t appear above the glow area.

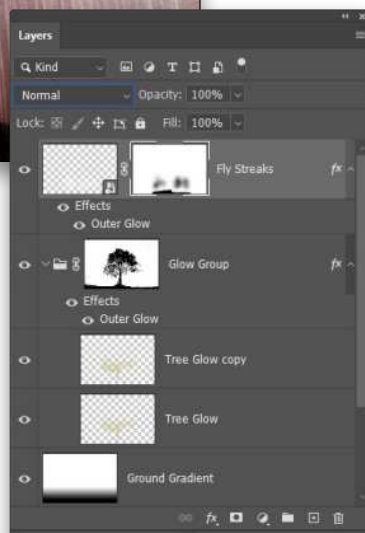
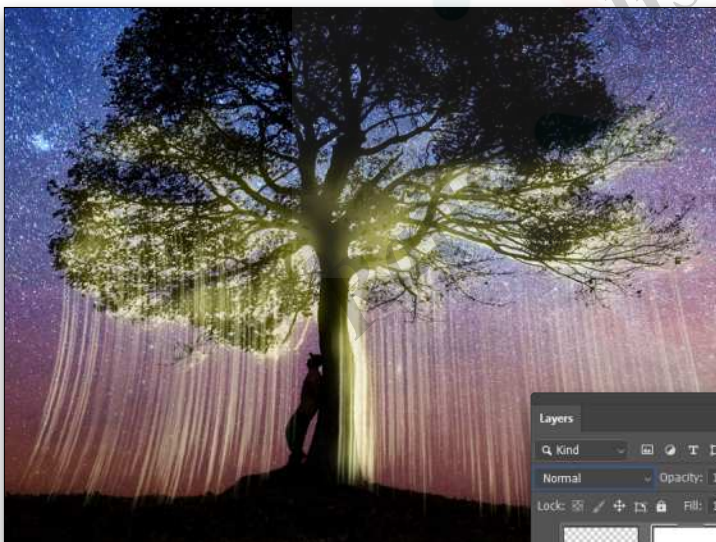


STEP 11: While holding the Option (PC: Alt) key, click-and-drag the Outer Glow layer style from the Glow Group to the Fly Streaks layer to copy the layer style. Double-click the words “Outer Glow” on the Fly Streaks layer to open the Layer Style dialog, and reduce the Size to 5 px and the glow Opacity to 32%. Click OK, and then go to



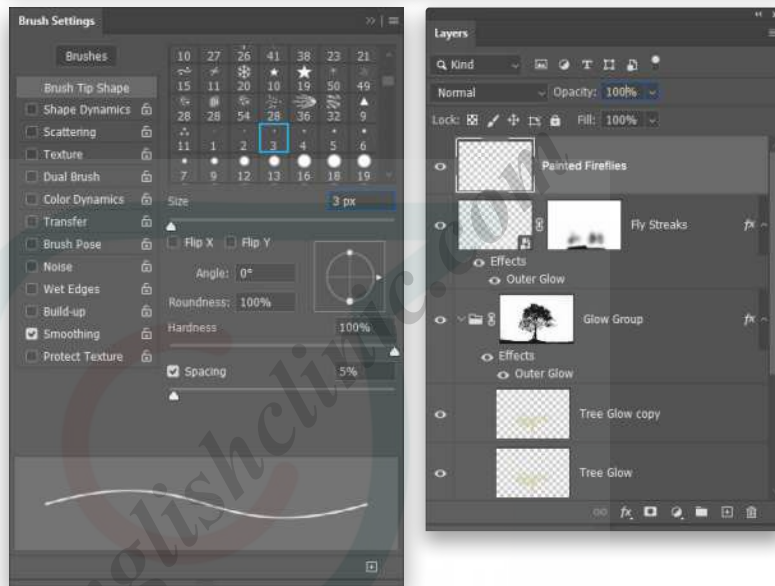


Edit>Transform>Warp. Stretch out the streaks and shape them to have a slight outward curve as the streaks extend toward the ground as shown here. Press Enter to commit the transformation.

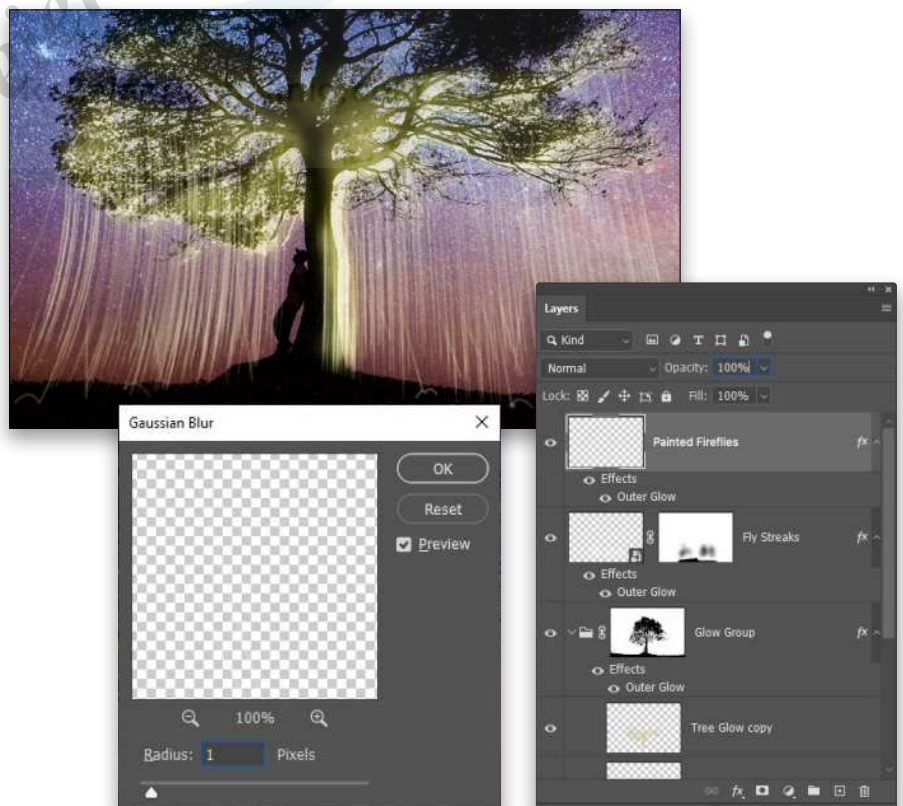


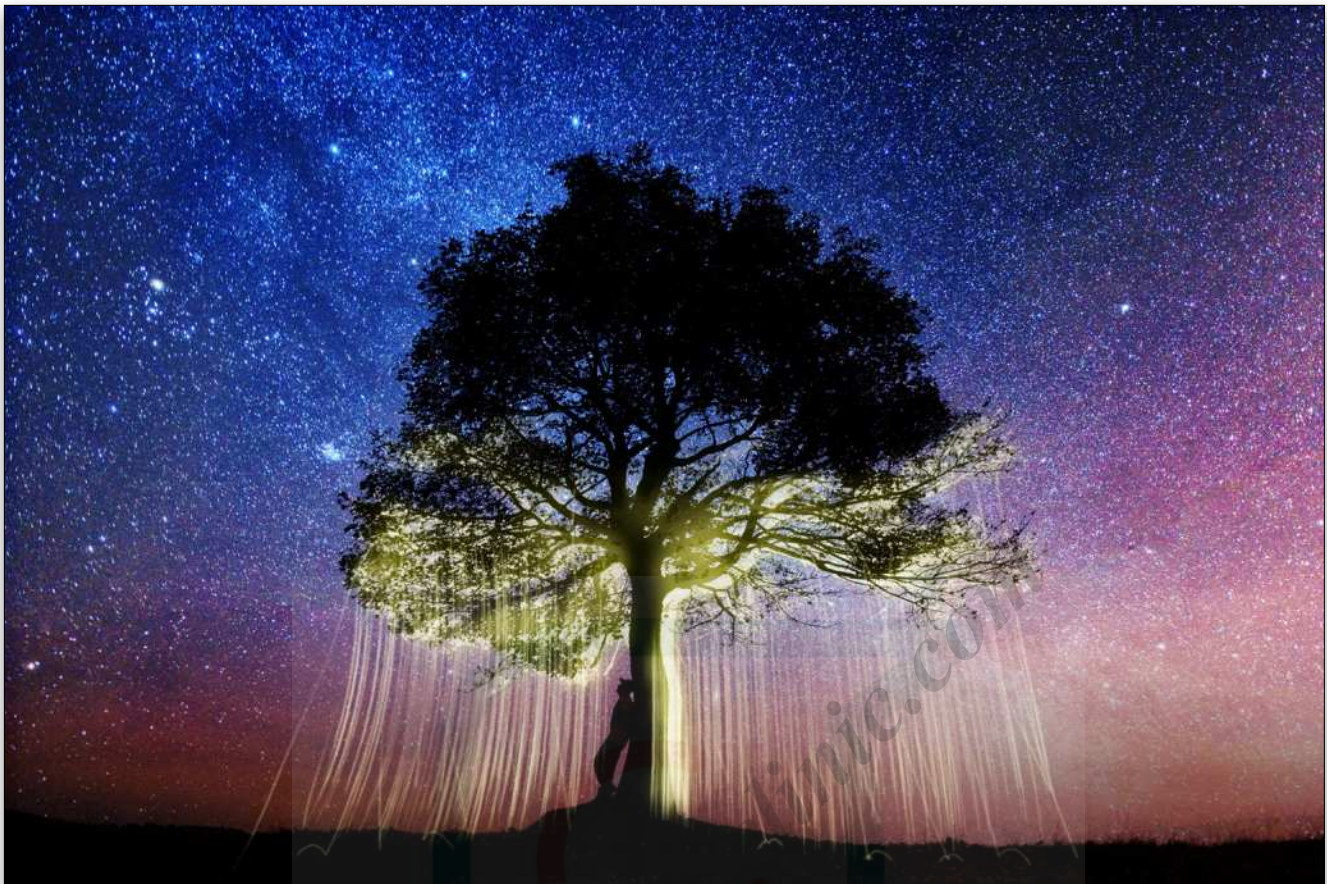
STEP 12: Click the Add Layer Mask icon (circle in a square) at the bottom of the Layers panel to add a mask to the Fly Streaks smart object. Use a large Soft Round brush with black paint to paint out the streaks that extend too far into the ground. Also consider reducing the brush Opacity in the Options Bar and creating some variation in the streak visibility as yet another way to make the effect look more organic.

STEP 13: Add another new layer called “Painted Fireflies.” Start again with the basic Hard Round Brush, and set the size to 3 pixels. Make sure Smoothing is turned on in the Brush Settings panel, and then in the Options Bar, set the Smoothing to a full 100%. Carefully paint in some smooth streaks that go diagonal to the main streaks and “bounce” on the ground.

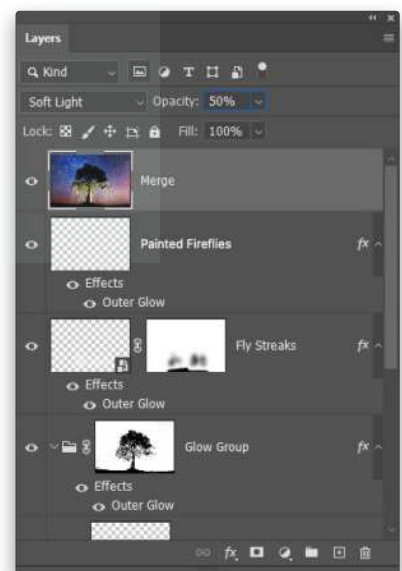
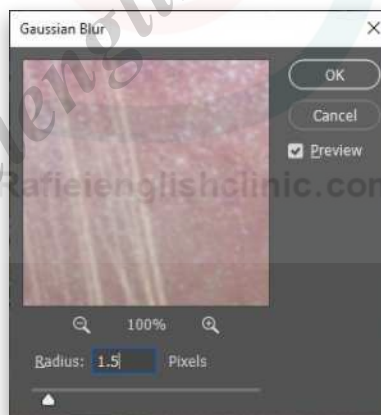


STEP 14: The painted lines come in a bit sharp, but that can be easily resolved with a quick application of Gaussian Blur, using just a 1-pixel Radius. Then copy the same Outer Glow layer style from the Fly Streaks layer to the Painted Fireflies layer so they all match up nicely. If needed, a few touches of the Eraser with a large, soft round tip at a low Opacity will create more natural-looking lines.





STEP 15: As a final effect to help mimic the softness of a long exposure, create a merged layer at the top of the layer stack by holding down the Option (PC: Alt) key and going to Layer>Merge Visible. Change the merged layer's blending mode to Soft Light, reduce the Opacity to 50%, and add a Gaussian Blur of 1.5 pixels.



The fun of finding new ways to use old tools in Photoshop can be just as enjoyable as finding a bioluminescent insect! In all seriousness, the best takeaway from a project like this is that Photoshop's tools have a lot more to offer than just the standard way of using them. Enjoy the exploration and discovery process as you experiment with new brushes and unique filter applications. ■

 Questions & Comments



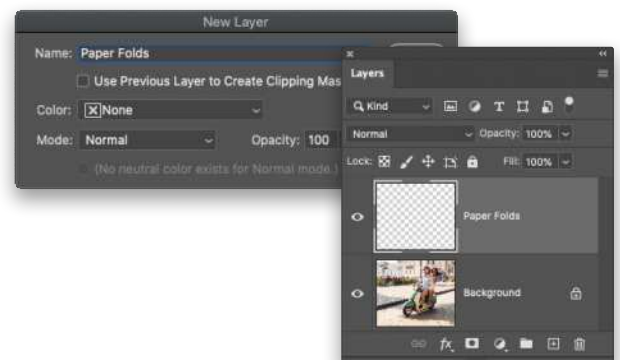
HOW TO CREATE A FOLDED PAPER EFFECT

In Photoshop, anything is possible. That includes making a digital photo look like it was printed and folded; lovingly toted around for years in someone's wallet. This folded paper effect is a slick graphic design trick that can evoke a feeling of nostalgia. Today you'll learn how to produce the effect on separate layers so you can swap in different photos.



STEP ONE: Open a photo in Photoshop and then choose Layer>New>Layer. In the resulting dialog, enter "Paper Folds" into the Name field and click OK. (If you're starting in Lightroom, select a thumbnail in the Library module and then choose Photo>Edit In>Adobe Photoshop 2021.)

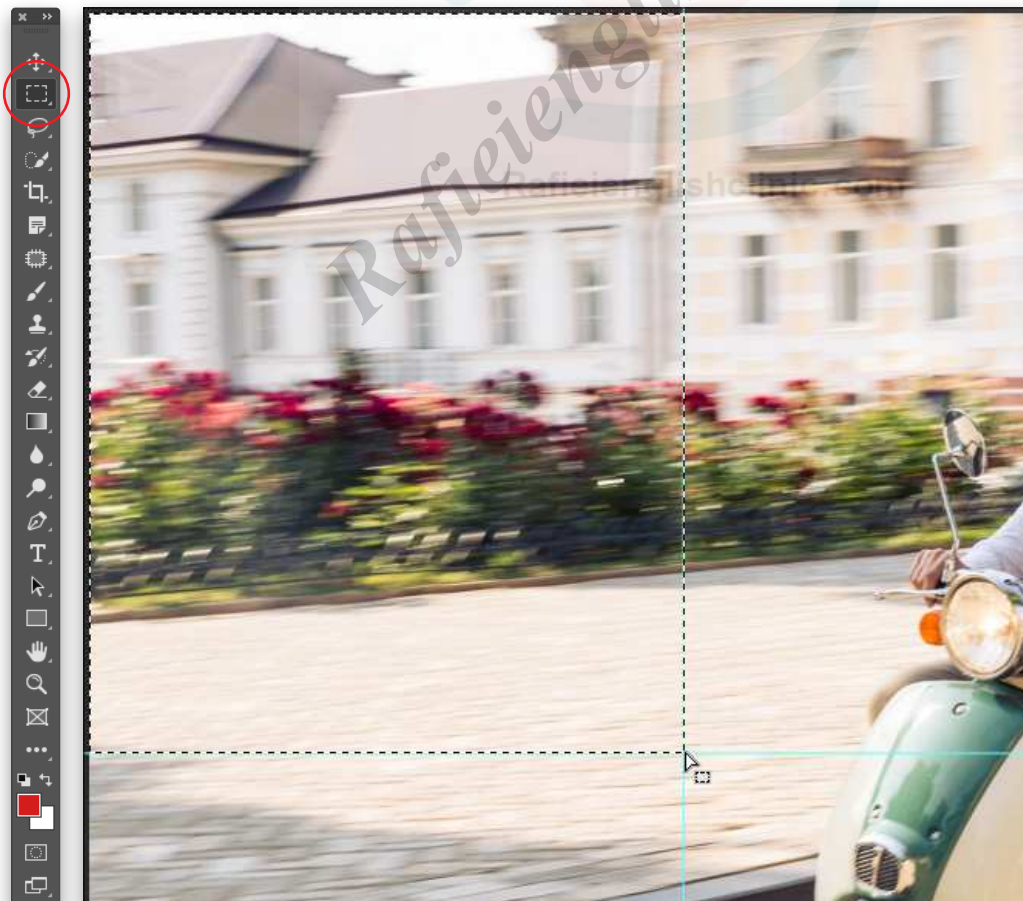
If you'd like to download the low-res watermarked versions of this image to follow along, click [this link](#), log in with your Adobe ID, and click the Save to Library button. Right-click the image in the Libraries panel (Window>Libraries), and choose Edit to open it in Photoshop.





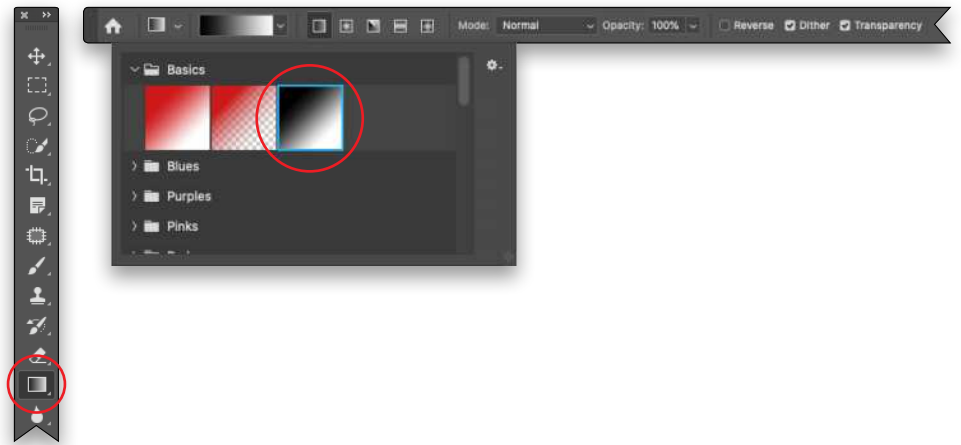
To make it easier to work with the image, increase the resolution of the practice file. (We normally don't recommend enlarging images, but this is only for practice purposes.) Go to Image>Image Size, turn on the Resample checkbox, select Preserve Details 2.0 from the Resample drop-down menu, set the Width to 3,000 pixels, and click OK. Then add a new layer as described above.

STEP TWO: We're going to use guides to divide the image into six sections of (roughly) equal size, so choose View>Rulers. Point your cursor at the ruler on the left of your screen and then drag two guides out that divide the photo into thirds. Next, point your cursor at the ruler at the top of your screen and drag a guide to the middle of the image. The guides don't have to be perfectly placed.



STEP THREE: Press M to grab the Rectangular Marquee tool (circled) and then draw a selection that encompasses the first section on the top row.

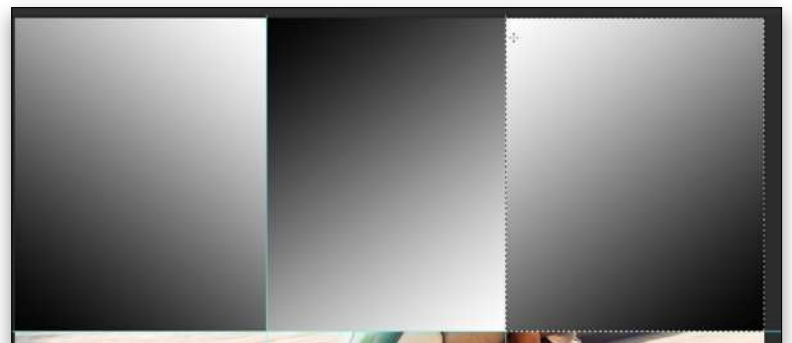
STEP FOUR: Press G to grab the Gradient tool (circled). In the Options Bar, click on the down-facing arrow next to the gradient preview thumbnail to open the Gradient Picker and, in the Basics folder, choose the Black, White preset (also circled). In the Options Bar, make sure the Linear Gradient is turned on, the Mode is set to Normal, and Opacity is 100%.

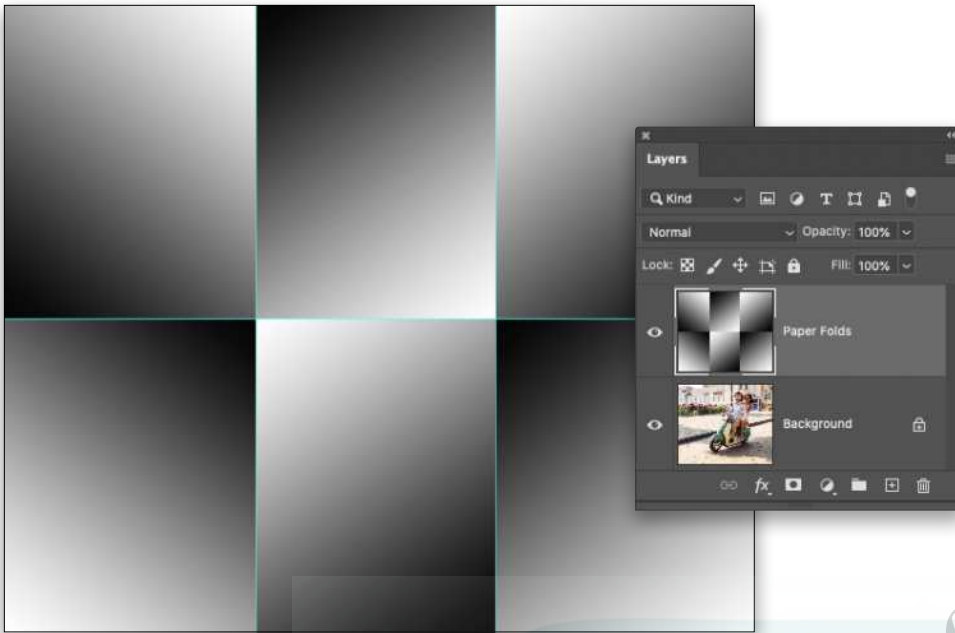


STEP FIVE: Point your cursor at the bottom-left corner of the selection and drag diagonally up to the top-right corner.

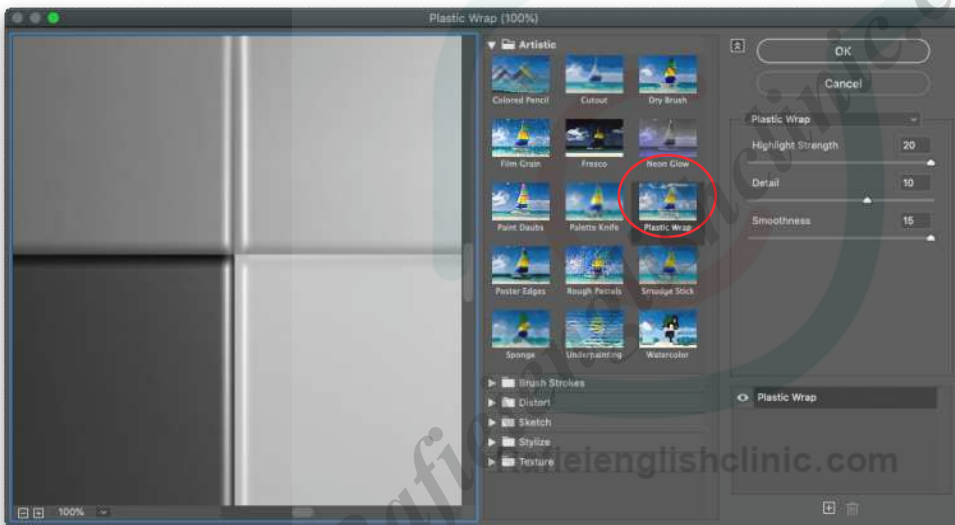


STEP SIX: Press M to switch back to the Rectangular Marquee and select the next section. Press G to grab the Gradient tool again and drag from the top-left corner of the selection down to the bottom-right corner. Repeat on the third section in the top row and draw the gradient from the bottom-right corner up to the top-left corner.

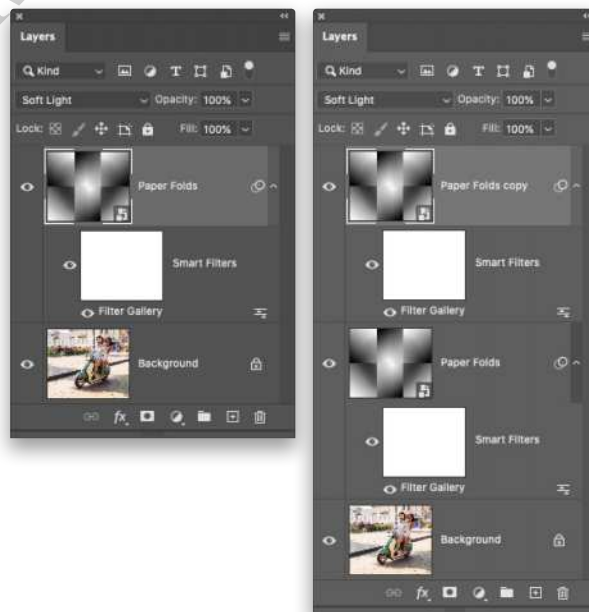




STEP SEVEN: Repeat Step Six to draw gradients across the second row. For the first section, drag from the top-right corner to the bottom-left corner. For the second section, drag from the bottom-right corner to the top-left corner. For the third section, drag from the top-left corner to the bottom-right corner. When you're finished, choose Select>Deselect.



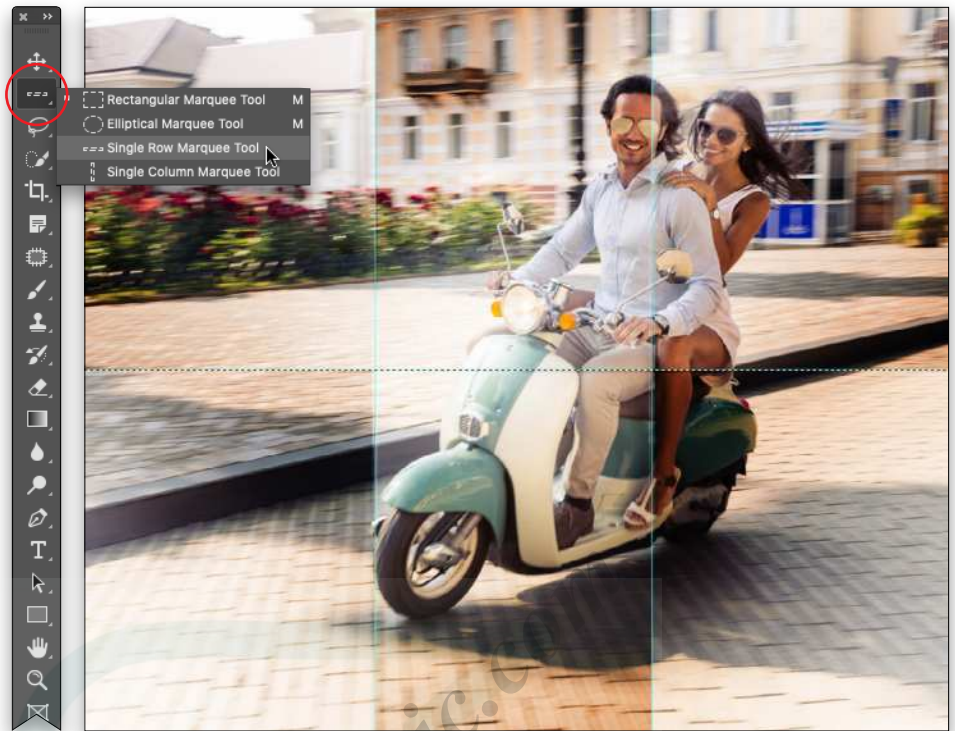
STEP EIGHT: With the Paper Folds layer active in your Layers panel, choose Filter>Convert for Smart Filters. (This turns the layer into a smart object, enabling you to reopen the filter you're about to run if you want to tweak its settings.) Choose Filter>Filter Gallery and, in the Artistic category, click Plastic Wrap. This filter will accentuate the edges of the gradients you just made, to make them stand out more and look like folds. Set Highlight Strength to around 20, Detail to around 10, and Smoothness to around 15. Click OK.



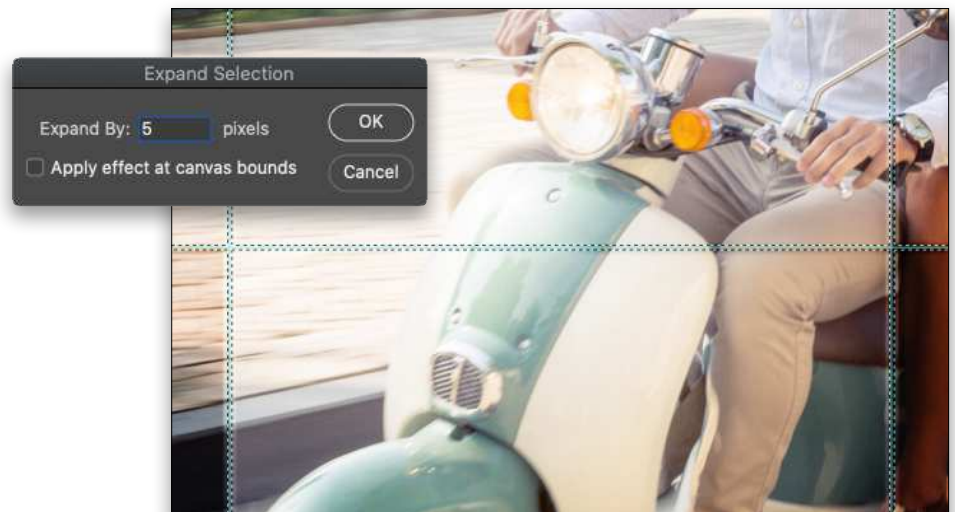
STEP NINE: In the Layers panel, set the blend mode drop-down menu to Soft Light, and then duplicate the Paper Folds layer by pressing Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J).

Tip: If you're working with a very high-pixel count image, you may need to duplicate the Paper Folds layer again to really see the folds. If another duplicate of the Paper Folds layer makes the effect too strong, lower its layer Opacity.

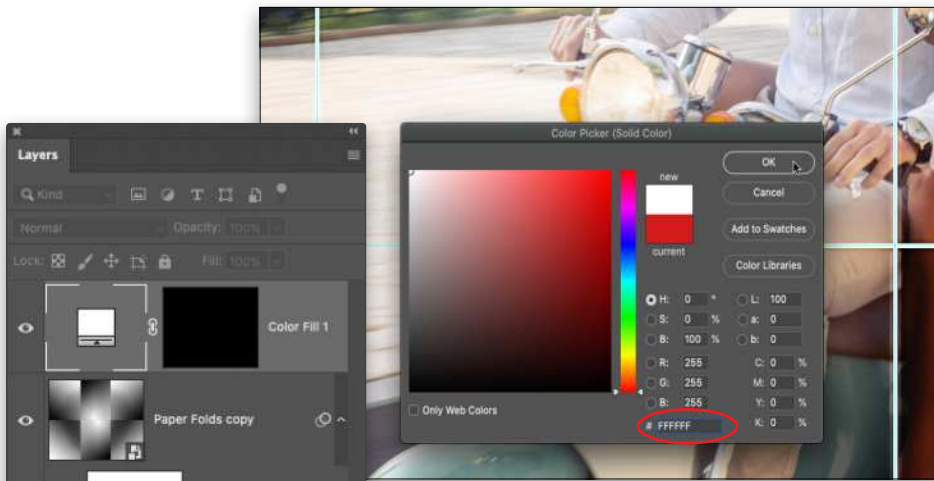
STEP 10: To distress the image along the fold lines, we'll create a selection that we'll fill with white, and then run a couple of filters on it. Start by grabbing the Single Row Marquee tool from the Toolbar (circled), which is nested with the Rectangular Marquee tool. Point your cursor anywhere along the horizontal guide and click once to select a single row of pixels along the guide.



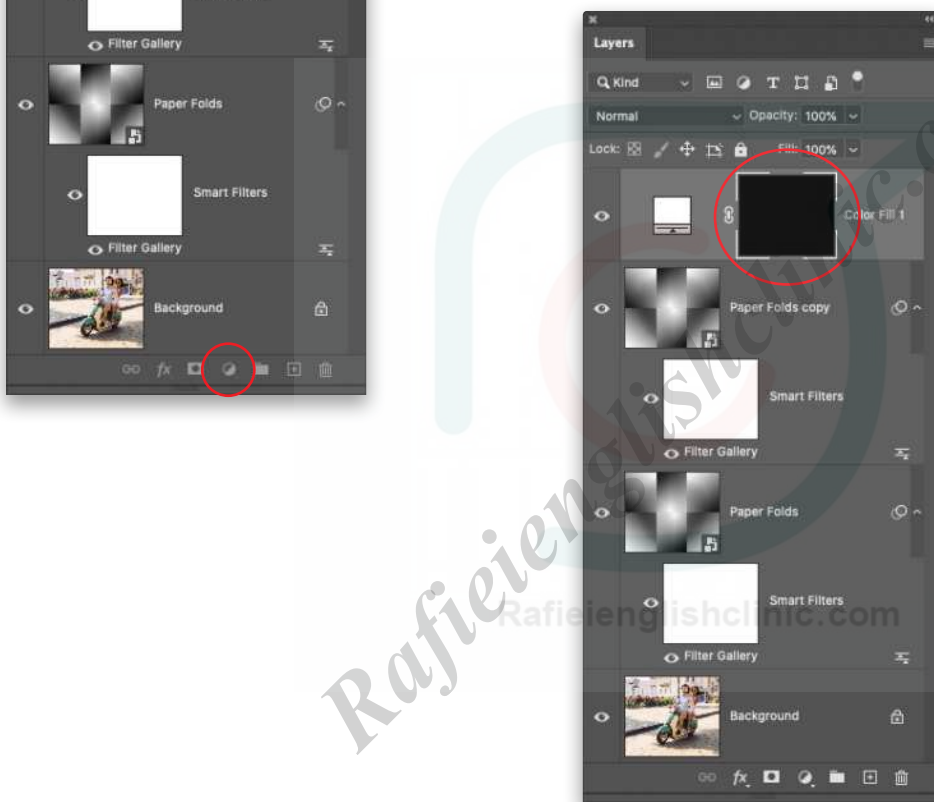
STEP 11: Switch to the Single Column Marquee tool and Shift-click the two vertical guides to add them to your selection. If you're working with a high-resolution image, you may need to zoom in to see the marching ants of the selection you're creating.



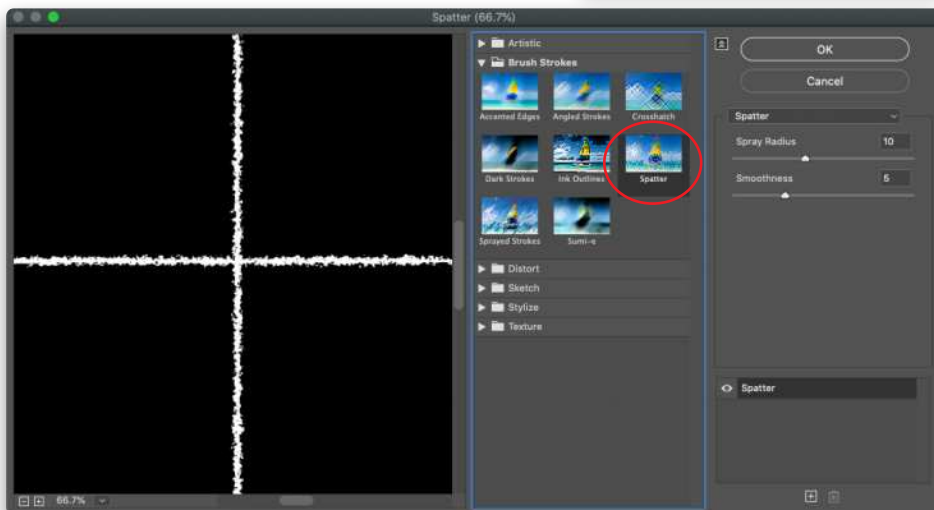
STEP 12: Make the selection bigger by choosing Select > Modify > Expand. In the dialog that opens, enter 5 pixels (try 3 on the Adobe preview image). Click OK.



STEP 13: Click the half-black/half-white circle at the bottom of the Layers panel (circled) and choose Solid Color. In the Color Picker that opens, enter FFFFFFFF (for white) into the # field (also circled). Click OK.



STEP 14: In the Layers panel, click to activate the Color Fill 1 layer's mask (circled).



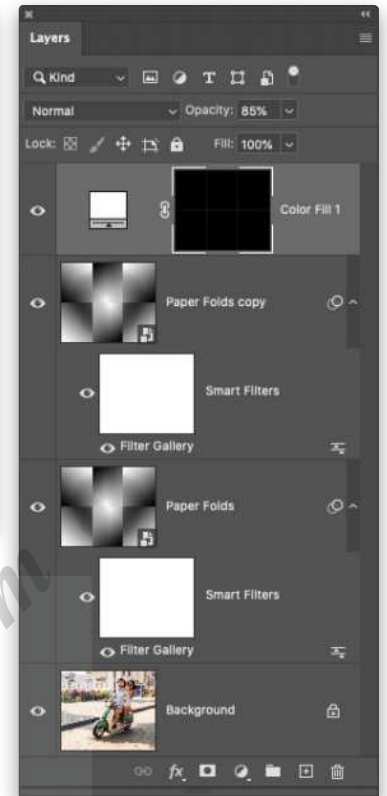
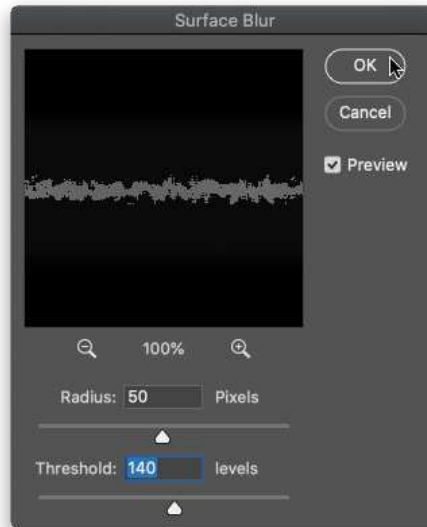
STEP 15: Choose Filter>Filter Gallery—be sure to choose the menu item with the ellipses, and not the Filter Gallery item that appears at the very top of the menu; otherwise, you'll simply rerun the last filter you ran! If that happens, press Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z) to undo and try again. In the dialog that opens, open the Brush Strokes folder, and click Spatter. Enter a Spray Radius of around 10 and Smoothness of around 5. Click OK.

STEP 16: Choose Filter>Blur>Surface Blur. In the resulting dialog, enter a Radius of around 50 and a Threshold of around 140 (try 40 and 120 on the Adobe preview image). Click OK.

STEP 17: Turn off the guides by choosing View>Show>Guides. Lower the layer Opacity of the Color Fill 1 layer to around 85%.

Below is a before and after of the final folded paper effect.

By saving this document as a Photoshop file (.psd extension), you can plop another similar pixel-count photo at the bottom of your layer stack and turn off the layer visibility of the original photo by clicking its Eye icon in the Layers panel. That trick will produce the folded paper effect without you having to re-create it. Until next time, may the creative force be with you all! ■



Questions & Comments



Before



After

Get professional-looking images using the camera you *always* have with you



KelbyOne Pro members:
Use your discount code
at rockynook.com to get
50% off your purchase

Imagine if someone took the same photographic techniques, principles, and tools used by high-end and professional photographers, but applied them to shooting with an iPhone. Imagine the type of images you'd be able to create using those same ideas. Well, Scott Kelby has done just that in his latest book—*The iPhone Photography Book: How to Get Professional-Looking Images Using the Camera You Always Have with You*.



DISCOVERING SOME COOL OPTIONS AND FUN FEATURES IN PHOTOSHOP

Working and playing in Photoshop is an experience: sometimes it's fun and rewarding; sometimes it's challenging. Either way, learning and discovering through experiences can help us grow as image-makers and give us endless control over our images.



In this article, I'd like to share with you some Photoshop options and features that will enhance your screen time. To illustrate these, I'll use some of my favorite photographs that I took in my hometown of Croton on Hudson, New York. But first, here's a joke about Photoshop instructors and a music analogy that apply to this article.

The Joke: How many Photoshop instructors does it take to change a lightbulb? One, plus 99 others to show you their own technique.

In other words, the following enhancements are just one of many methods for achieving the desired effect.

The Analogy: I teach piano jazz improvisation. No kidding! If you were one of my students and were playing a jazz standard such as *Somewhere Over the Rainbow*, you might ask me, "What note (out of 88) should I start on? What mode (out of seven) should I play in? And what notes should I leave in or out?" I'd answer, "It depends on your creative vision." I'd add, "To fully answer that

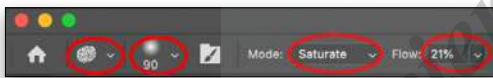
question would involve a long, in-depth conversation, because there are so many options.”

When it comes to some of the Photoshop dialogs shown here, including the dialog for the Drop Shadow layer style, the starting point depends on your creative vision. Also, describing all the options (sliders, checkboxes, etc.) in detail would involve a long, in-depth conversation, which would fill up lots of pages in this magazine. So I've included only some basic tips to get you started in the discovery process, kind of like giving a starter jazz improv piano lesson.

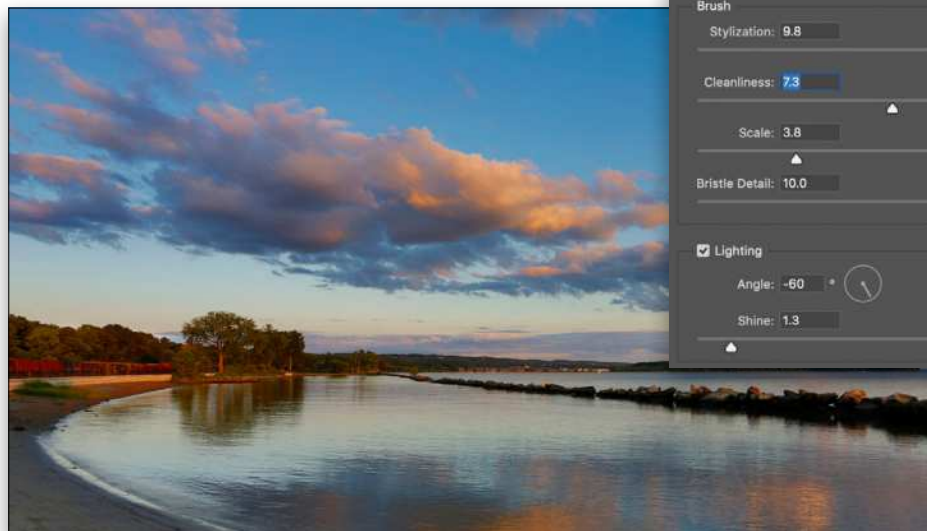
Okay, let's go!

THE OPTIONS BAR IS OPEN

The Option Bar is the bar at the top of the Photoshop interface. Here you'll find *essential* options that let you fine-tune the effects of the tools in the Toolbar. When using a tool, I *always* play around with its various settings in the Options Bar, as I did when working on my double-rainbow image (taken on one of our walks along the Hudson River) that opens this article. (As an aside, the colors of a double rainbow are reversed, as you can see if you look closely. On the inner rainbow, the color red is on the outside; on the outer rainbow, the color red is on the inside.)



Important: The Options are different for each tool. In this screen grab of the left side of the Options Bar for the Sponge tool (which is nested with the Dodge and Burn tools [O]), the first icon of the tool itself is where you can save and access tool presets. The second icon, which is a preview of the currently selected brush for the Sponge tool, opens the Brush Preset Picker where you can select the brush style and size (soft and 90 px, respectively, in this example). The folder icon with the brush will open the Brush Settings panel, and Mode has two options: Saturate and Desaturate. And then there's Flow, which I'll explain in a moment.



If you've never used the Sponge tool, it works like a brush: You control the size and shape in either the Brush Preset Picker or the Brush Settings panel.

My goal was to *slightly* enhance the colors of the two rainbows, especially the outer rainbow. With the Flow set at 100%, when I brushed over the rainbows, the colors were way oversaturated. Plus, the effect was applied too quickly. So, I kept decreasing the Flow (which controls how intense/quickly the effect is applied) until I was pleased with the result.

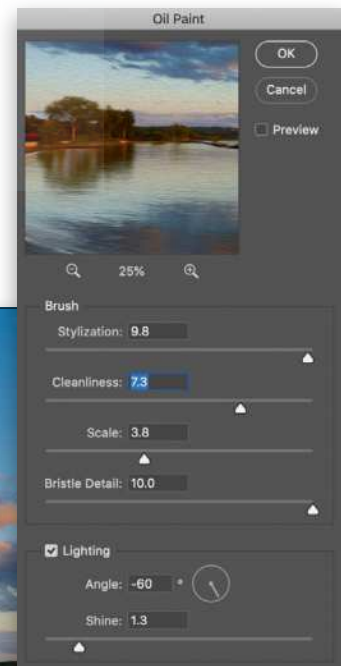
I actually have never used the Sponge tool in the Desaturate mode, but if you want to reduce the intensity of the colors in a particular area of an image, this tool is for you.

FADE A FILTER FOR FURTHER ENHANCEMENTS

Fading a filter (reducing its effect on an image) is a cool way to expand the capability of a filter *after* you've applied it to an image. Let's take a look.

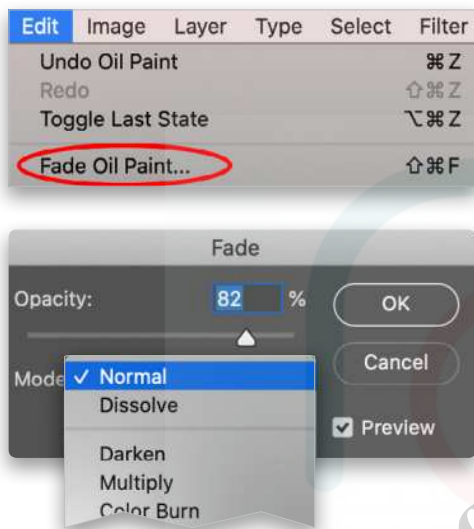
Here's another shot from one of our Hudson River walks. The sky and water looked as though they were created by a painter, so I thought I'd try creating a painterly-like image (similar to the ones created by the artists at the world-famous Hudson River School of painting).

By applying the Oil Paint Filter (Filter>Stylize>Oil Paint), I transformed my sharp shot into a softer image that looks more like a painting than a photograph.



While applying the Oil Paint filter, you have several options, as you can see in this screen grab; however, it's hard to see the true effect of your choices because the preview window is relatively small. Also, the resolution of the image affects how the filter will be rendered, meaning that it will look different when applied to a very large file compared to a very small file.

To fade the filter in this case, go to Edit>Fade Oil Paint. I say "in this case" because whatever filter you apply, you'll get a prompt to fade that particular filter. For example, if you applied the Gaussian Blur filter and went to the Fade command, the prompt would say Fade Gaussian Blur.



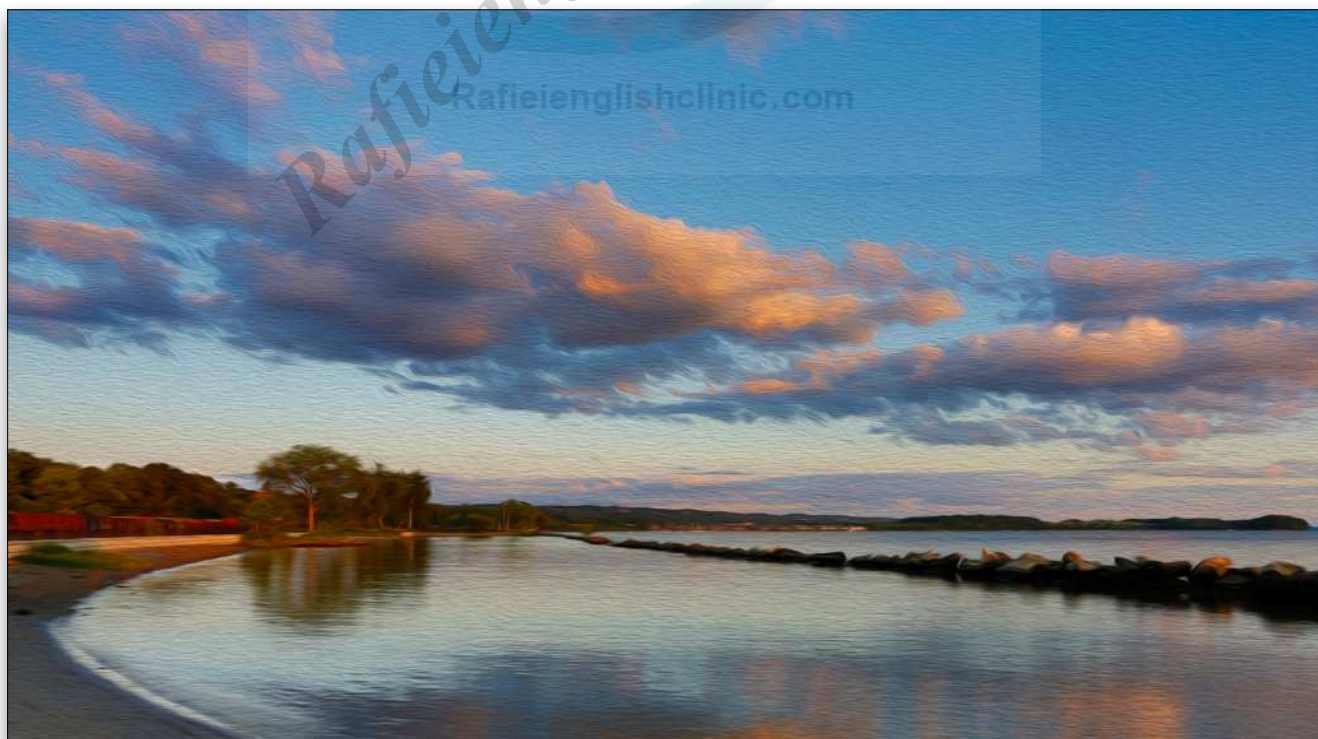
More control awaits you! In the Fade dialog, you get an Opacity slider and a Mode drop-down menu with many different blending options, as shown in this screen grab. After experimenting with the different options, I used the Normal mode and faded the filter to 82%.

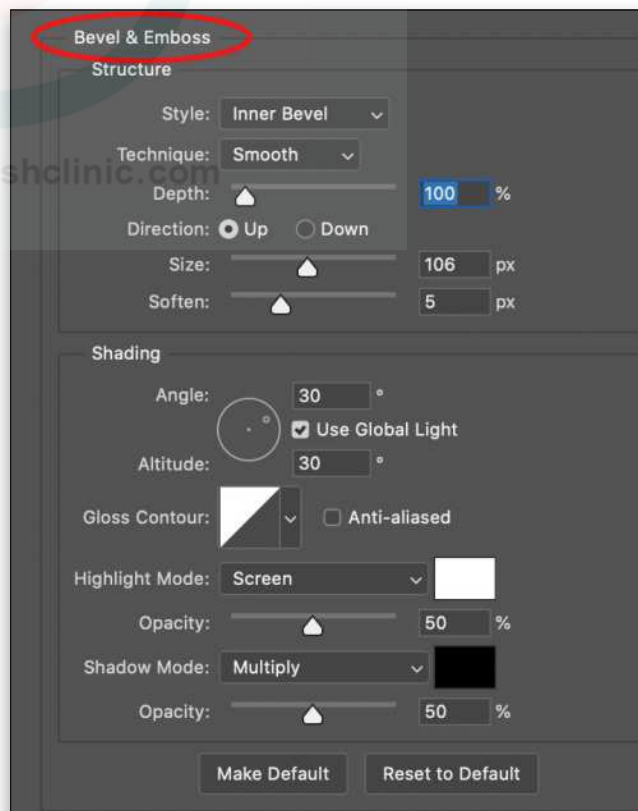
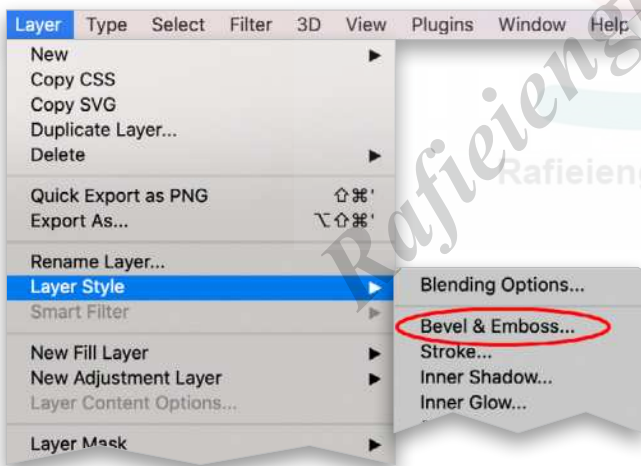
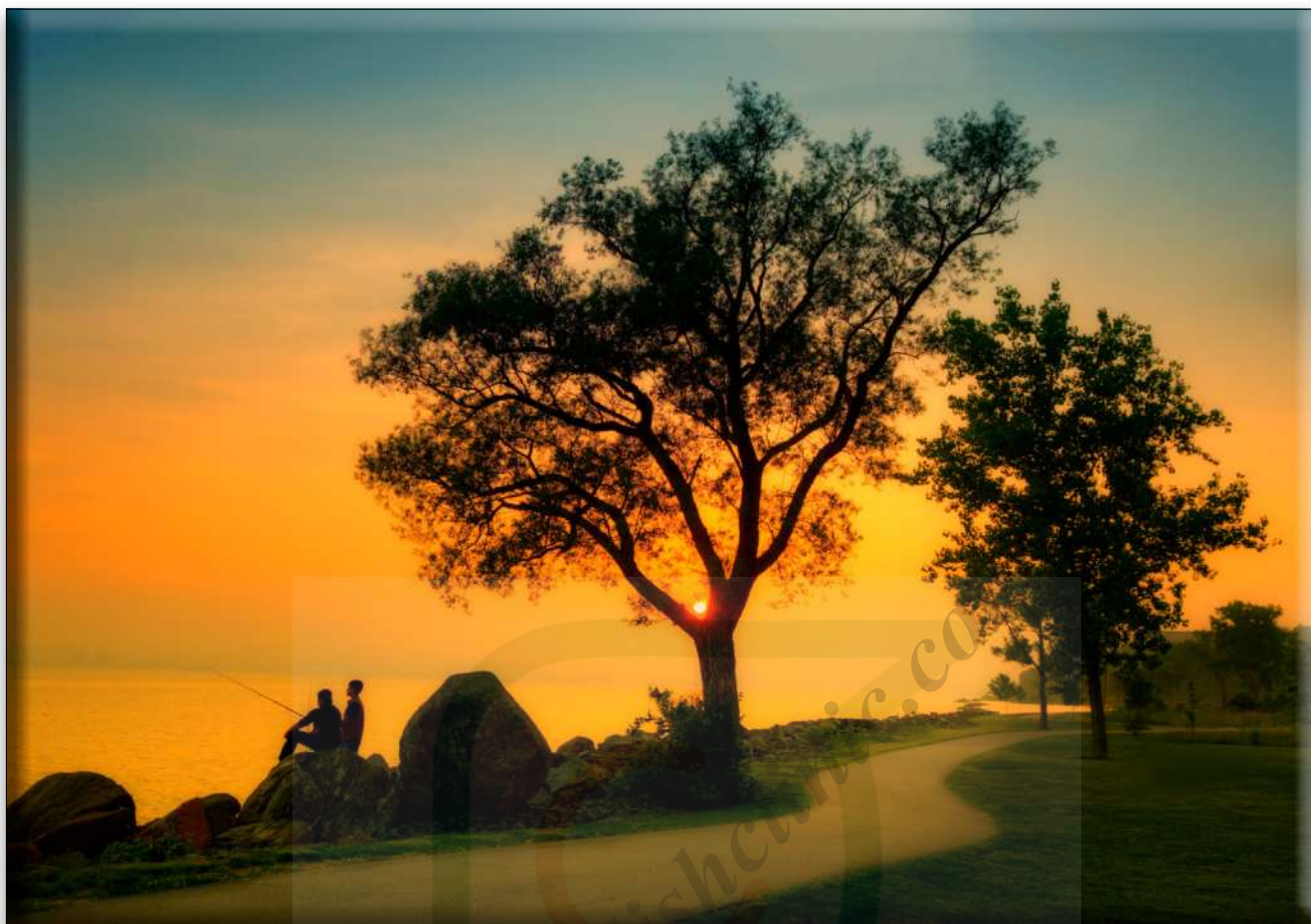
Note: If you do anything to your image *after* you apply the filter and *before* you go to the Fade command (for example, if you crop it), you'll no longer be able to fade the filter. That's just how Photoshop works. But as long as you don't do anything else to the image, you can keep going back to the Fade command to tweak the settings.

BE STYLISH WITH LAYERS STYLES

Layers are one of the main reasons why I love using Photoshop, and layer styles add to that enjoyment. Here's how to apply a layer style: Once you create a duplicate layer (Layer>Duplicate Layer is one of several methods), go to Layer>Layer Style and choose the effect you want. For certain layer styles, you'll need to either enlarge the canvas size or make a selection; otherwise, you just can't see the effect (we'll talk a little more about that in a moment, but again, an in-depth Photoshop layer styles improv lesson here would take several pages).

For now, we'll keep it simple by applying the Bevel & Emboss Layer Style to another Hudson River walk



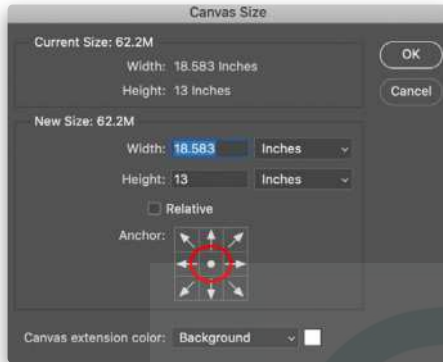


photograph. So, after duplicating my layer, I went to Layer>Layer Style>Bevel & Emboss.

Yikes! Look at all those options! Here, as with the Options Bar, you need to play around with the settings to get the effect you like. I only played around with the Size to add the desired effect to my image.

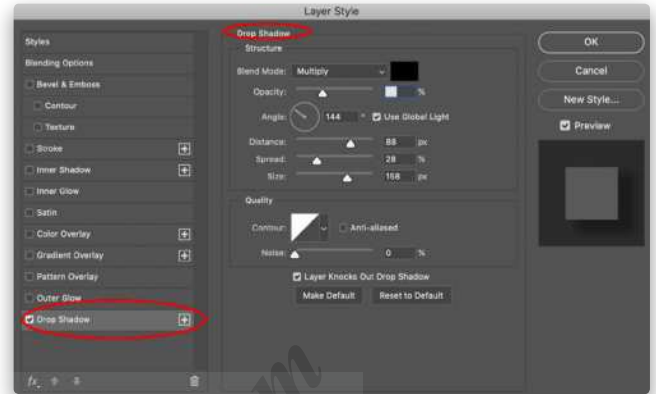
In this next example, we're going to apply two layer styles: Drop Shadow and Stroke. To see the Drop Shadow, however, you'll need to increase the canvas size.

After duplicating the layer, I went to Image>Canvas Size and increased the canvas size around the image by clicking on the center box in the Anchor grid, turning off Relative, and then adding 2" to the Width and Height. I also set the Canvas Extension Color to Background, which is white in this example. After clicking OK, this provided enough white space all around the original image area.

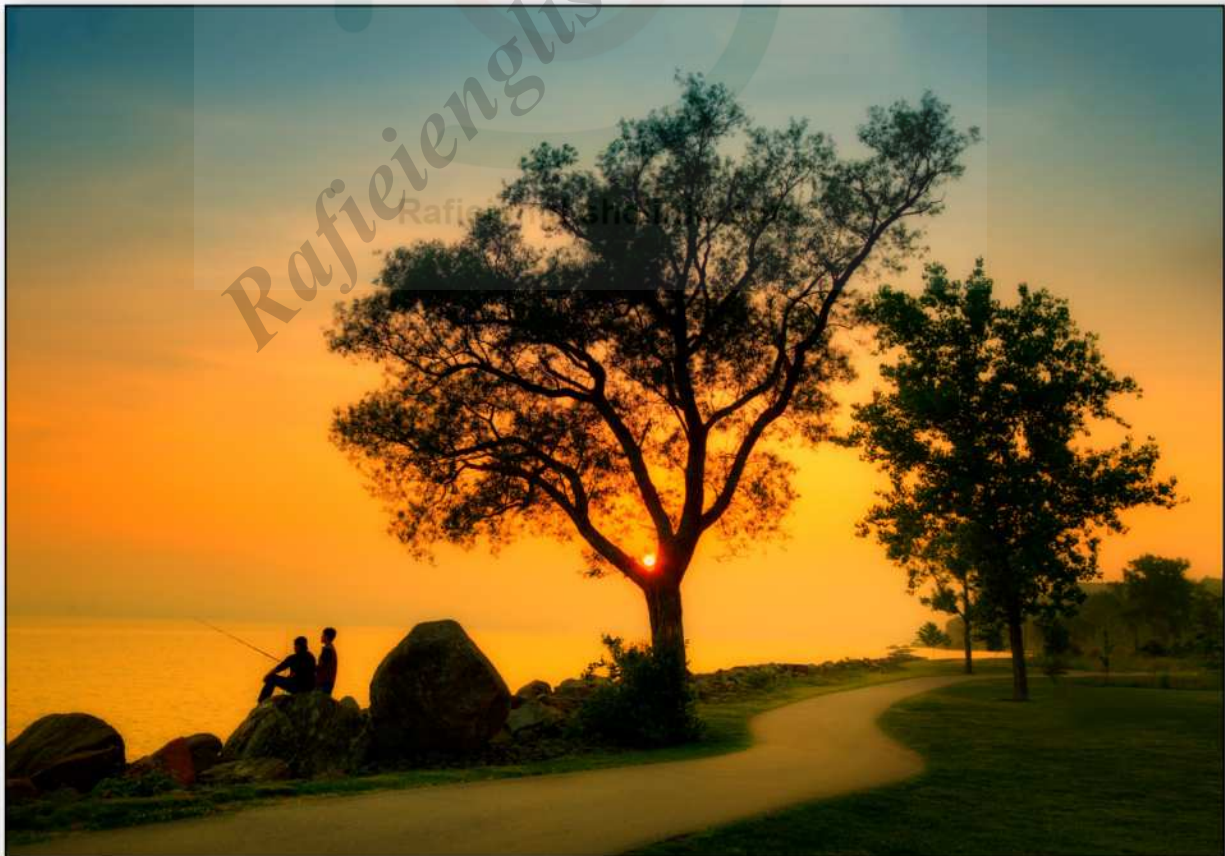


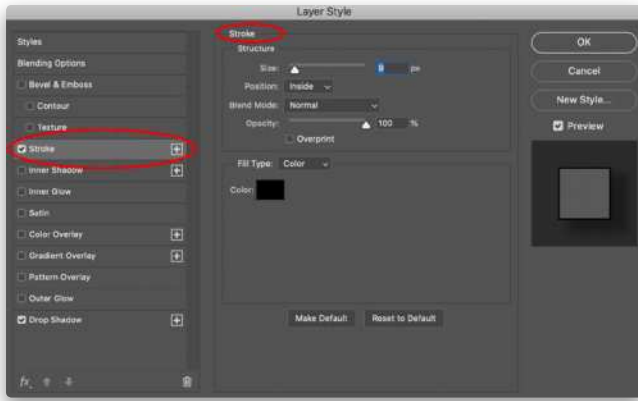
Next, I went to Layer>Layer Styles and selected Drop Shadow. Yikes again! So many options from which to choose! In this window I played around with the Angle, Distance, Spread, and Size to get the effect for which

I was looking: the effect of the image floating on a white page. You can also click-and-drag inside your image area to manually position the Drop Shadow in the desired position. For this image, I placed it at the bottom right, but you can position it anywhere.



After applying the Drop Shadow, I now wanted to apply my second layer style, Stroke, to outline the image with a thin black line. To apply another layer style and access its settings while the Layer Style dialog is still open, click directly on the *name* of the layer style that you want to use on the left. If you click in the checkbox, it will turn





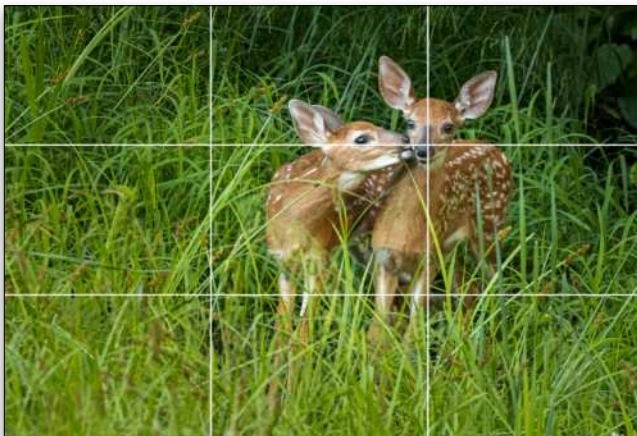
on the effect but not switch over to its settings. Here I set the Size of the Stroke to 9 px; choosing a larger Size would have created a thicker black line, and vice versa.

Tip: After applying a layer style, you can always go back and tweak its settings by double-clicking its name in the Layers panel.

CHECK YOUR COMPOSITION WITH CROP OVERLAYS

Displaying overlays while using the Crop tool (C) is a good method for checking your composition; that is, if you follow the rules of composition (which I talk about in my KelbyOne class, *The 20 Time-Proven Rules of Composition*).

To see the various overlay options, switch to the Crop tool (C), click in the image to activate the crop boundary, and click on the grid icon in the Options Bar. By default, it's set to Rule of Thirds and Always Show Overlay.



Next, click on the desired Overlay. In the example at the bottom left, we selected the Golden Ratio (which is also a good way to check to see if your horizon line is level). If you get tired of seeing the overlay, just choose Never Show Overlay.

The Golden Spiral is another time-proven composition technique. Here you see how I checked my composition using that overlay so the eye goes straight to the head of the guitar, which shows the make and model of the instrument. (Hey, Scott "Rockin' Guitar Player" Kelby! This one's for you!)

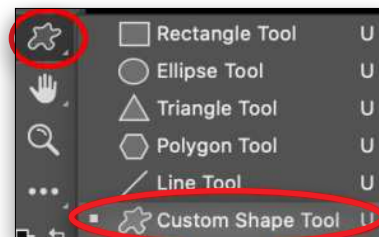


Tip: Press the letter O on your keyboard to cycle through the various overlays.

CUSTOM SHAPES ARE COOL

Okay, some of you may think that custom shapes are corny rather than cool, but I get it. I use them mainly for fun. See the next page where I used two custom shapes (a thought bubble and copyright symbol) on a photograph that I took of a Canada goose landing on the pond in our backyard.

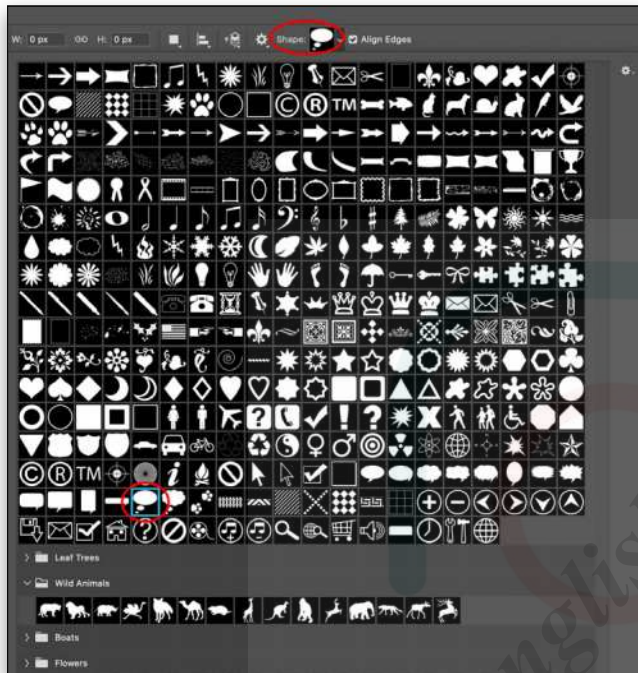
To find custom shapes in Photoshop, first select the Custom Shape tool in the Toolbar, which is nested under the Rectangle tool (U).



Next, go to our friend the Options Bar and click on either the preview or arrow next to Shape to Open the

Custom Shape Picker. Click-and-drag the bottom-right corner of the Picker to expand it so you can see more of the shapes. Use the gear icon at the top right to select how the shapes are displayed.

In the Custom Shape Picker, you'll see folders such as Leaf Trees, Wild Animals, Flowers, and more. Expand these folders to see their contents. If you don't see a folder called Legacy Shapes and More, go to the Shapes panel (Window>Shapes), click on the flyout menu at the



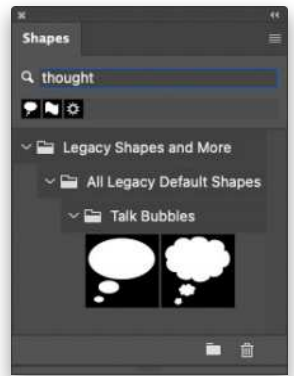
top right, and choose Legacy Shapes and More. You should now see that folder back in the Custom Shape Picker.

After you select a shape, click-and-drag inside your image to draw it. If you hold down the Spacebar on your keyboard (while still holding down your mouse button/stylus), you can move the shape around your file to position it. Use the Shift key to constrain its proportions. In the Options Bar, you can change the color of the shape by clicking the Fill swatch and then choosing a color.

In the Shapes panel, use the search field at the top to quickly find shapes. For example, type "thought" and you'll find the folder location of the thought bubble that I used in the example below.

Have fun with this feature. It's great for adding a personal or fun touch to eCards that you send to family and friends, and for posting amusing images on social media.

Well, my friends, that's it for now. As always, have fun discovering the creative options and features in Photoshop. ■



 Questions & Comments

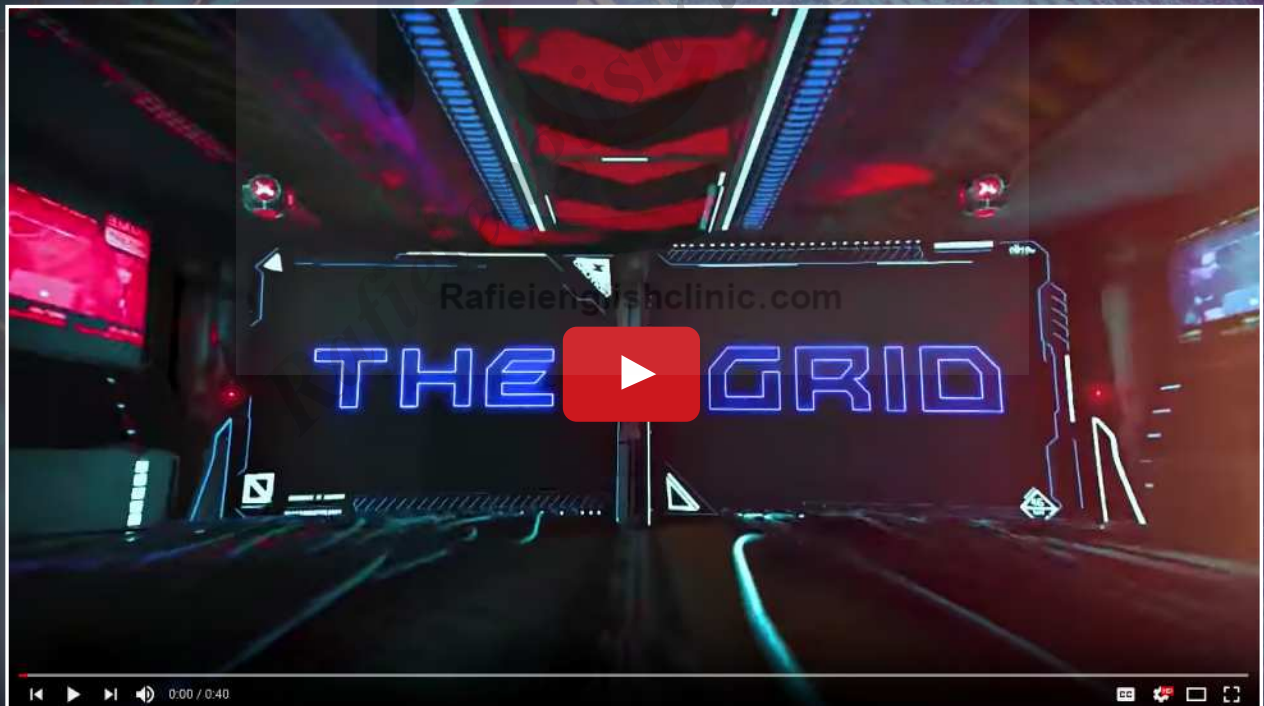


ALL IMAGES BY RICK SAMMON

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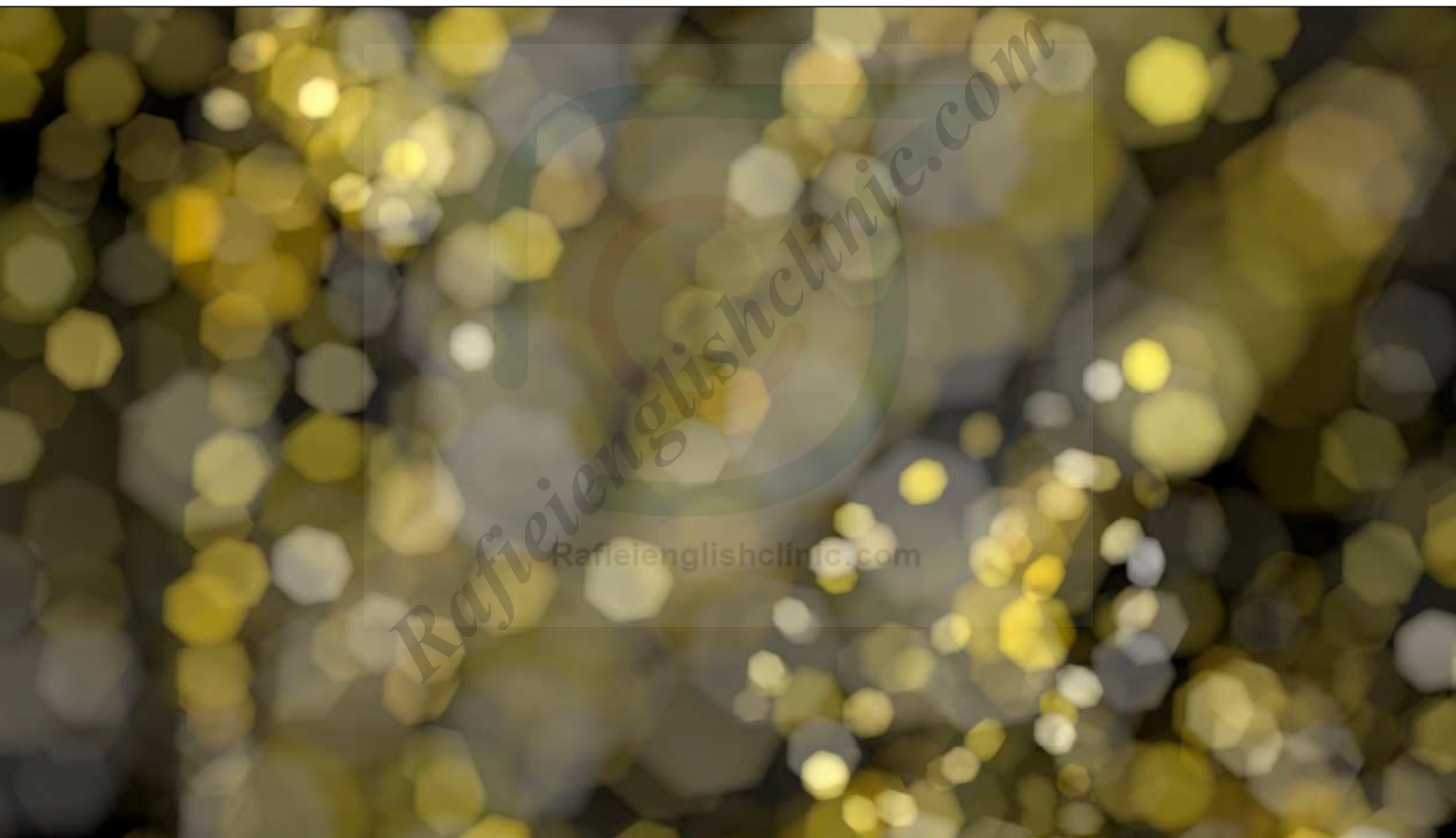




FAKE BOKEH WITH LENS BLUR

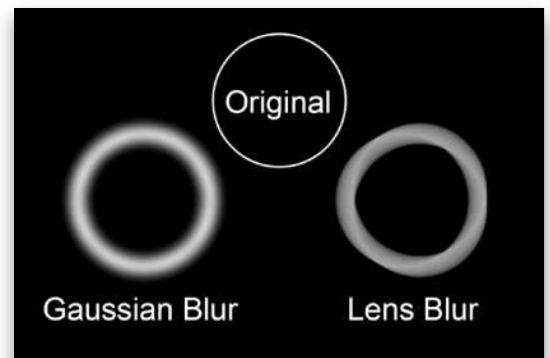
Bokeh is a somewhat loaded term that can start arguments in any place where two or more photographers have gathered. In general, it refers to the quality of out-of-focus areas of an image and, in particular, how specular highlights and tiny light sources are represented. The most common discussions center on the shape and quality of those highlight effects: a kind of shaped blur that's not easy to reproduce, and isn't the same as the typical Gaussian Blur with which we're all familiar. If you've used the Lens Blur filter, you're familiar with how it affects these areas of your image. But what if you want these effects in an image that doesn't have specular highlights?

Scott Valentine



It turns out we don't need an image at all! We can extract the bokeh effect directly from the Lens Blur filter, and use the results, much like we would with the Lens Flare filter, by rendering them to their own layer.

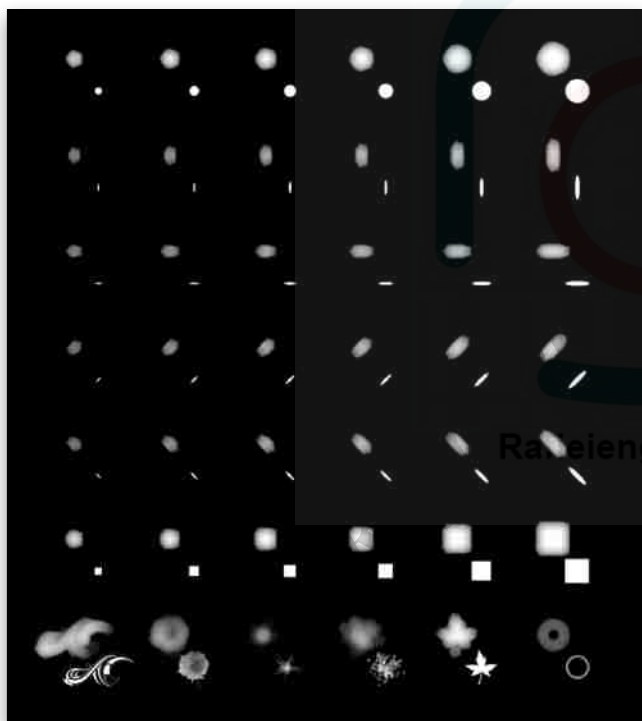
To the right, I'm using a test document that's 8-bit RGB with a black background and a blank layer above that. Lens Blur doesn't work with smart objects, which means if we want variations, we're going to need to make copies on which to work (we'll cover that in a moment). Here, I've applied roughly similar levels of blur using Gaussian Blur and Lens Blur to illustrate the difference.



Note that the Gaussian Blur result is smooth and uniform, while the Lens Blur isn't as soft, and there's a very slight variation or pattern present. The pattern is a direct result of using the Triangle shape aperture in the Lens Blur filter.

The next example demonstrates how the Lens Blur filter treats different sizes and shapes of marks. Again, real-world scenes include specular highlights and bright areas of different shapes and sizes. The following screenshot compares the Lens Blur result with its original mark to the lower right.

Important: The bokeh effect is highly dependent on the relationship of the brush size to the canvas size! This test file was created at 2000x2000 px. Larger photos will require larger brush sizes, and larger Radius settings in the Lens Blur filter.



Look carefully at the variations. Every mark was treated to the same settings: Pentagon-shaped aperture with Radius set to 20, with Blade Curvature and Rotation set to zero. Except for the last row, the marks progress in size from 15–50 px and vary in shape and orientation. The last row is meant to show the effect on some random shapes.

There are two things to notice right away. First, as the object gets larger, the result tends to get brighter and shows less influence of the shape of the aperture. Second, the orientation of the object distorts the resulting blur rather than simply rotating it. Gaussian Blur doesn't

care about rotation, but there's an inherent directionality to the Lens Blur bokeh.

Now let's look at progressively smaller dots, simulating those pinprick size specular highlights that can come from stars or tiny string lights.

The bokeh blur doesn't really get much smaller as the dot gets smaller, but it does become more transparent and the edges get sharper. In the real world, lights aren't going to be uniformly bright, or the same size, or all shaped the same. Hopefully, these examples have made the case for using Lens Blur instead of Gaussian Blur for simulating bokeh!

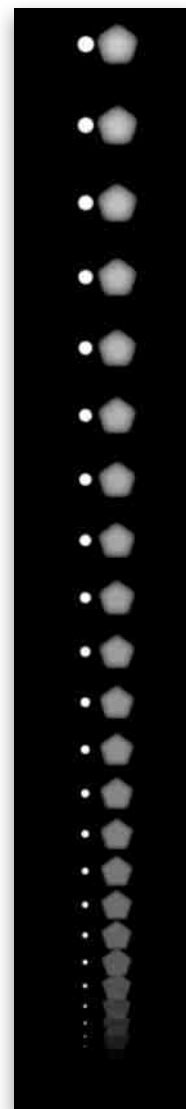
PAINTING IN BOKEH

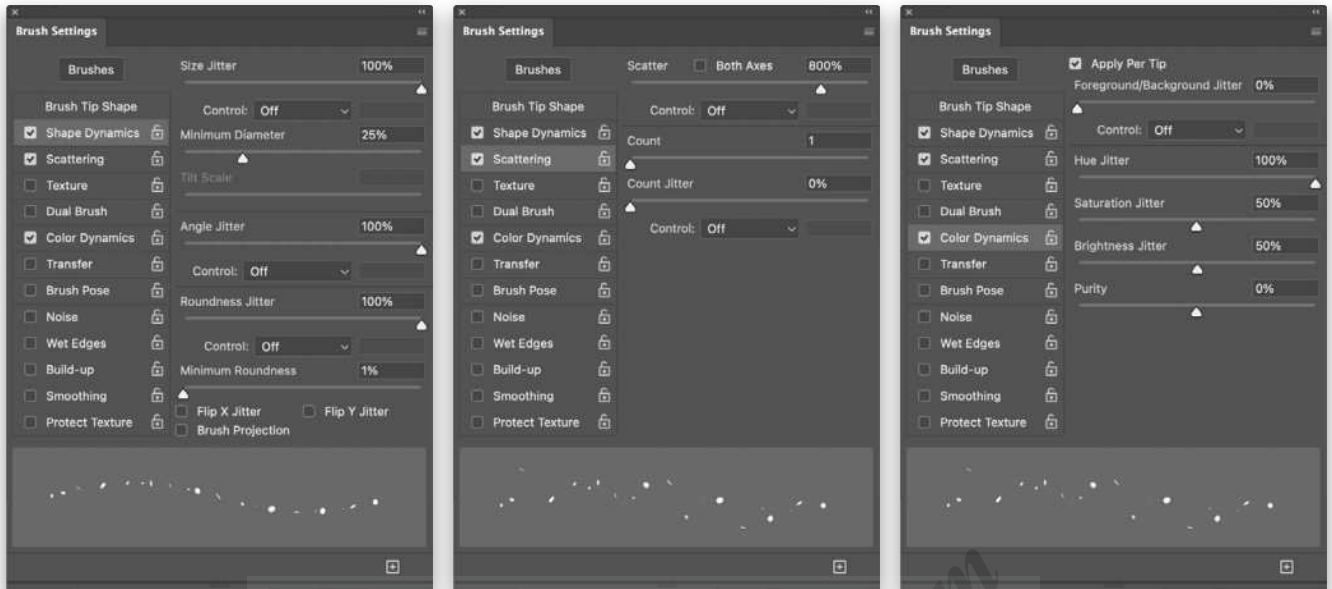
Now that we have this insight, how do we apply it to our images? Previously, I pointed out that Lens Blur doesn't work with smart objects. Another issue is that applying Lens Blur to a transparent layer with painted dots usually results in a faint, faded effect. We want maximum brightness and flexibility. Fortunately, the answer is relatively simple.

STEP ONE: With a photo open in a new document, first add a Solid Color fill layer (Layer>New Fill Layer>Solid Color) above your image layer and set it to black, then turn off the Color Fill layer's visibility by clicking its Eye icon in the Layers panel.

STEP TWO: Add a blank layer on top of the layer stack, double-click its name, and rename it "Dots." Before we go painting in our lights, I want to set up a custom brush that will show off the technique.

STEP THREE: Grab the Brush tool (B), and in the Brush Tip Shape section of the Brush Settings panel (Window>Brush Settings), start with a round, basic brush set to 100% Hardness. Increase the Spacing to about 350%. This first photo is about 7000x4700, so the starting brush size is 50 px. Set the following options:





SHAPE DYNAMICS

- Size Jitter: 100%
- Minimum Diameter: 25%
- Angle Jitter: 100%
- Roundness Jitter: 100%
- Minimum Roundness: 1%

SCATTERING

- Scatter: 800%

COLOR DYNAMICS

- Apply Per Tip
- Hue Jitter: 100%
- Saturation Jitter: 50%
- Brightness Jitter: 50%
- Purity: 0%



Original photo

STEP FOUR: Click on the Foreground color swatch near the bottom of the Toolbar, select any bright color, and click OK to close the Color Picker. Start brushing on the Dots layer with 100% Flow and Opacity in the Options Bar. Be reserved and try not to get too dense at first. Once you have a few areas covered, turn on the Color Fill layer's visibility.

Note: If you want to produce only strings of lights, turn off Scattering and reduce or turn off the Shape Dynamics settings.

This brush will produce a lot of variation such as you might get from a city scene. You could also use single dabs from spatter brushes, or just create tiny speckles; whatever suits your scene and creative goal.

The Depth Map area in the Lens Blur filter is really interesting, since it lets you change the apparent depth of field and focal point. You'll need to apply a mask to your stamped Bokeh layer (see Step Five) and then, once in the Lens Blur dialog, you can choose Layer Mask from the Source drop-down menu to work with it. Try a simple gradient mask to see how it works!



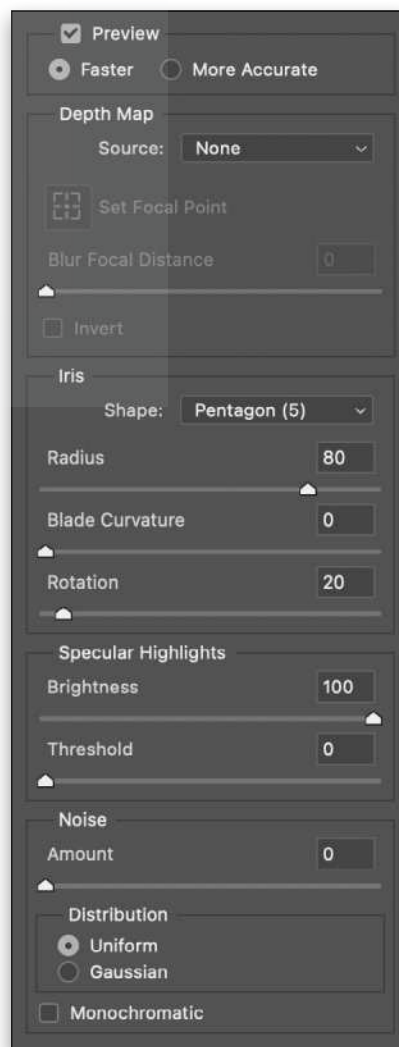
STEP FIVE: Now it's time for my favorite keyboard shortcut: "The Claw." With the blank layer selected, press Shift-Command-Option-E (PC: Shift-Ctrl-Alt-E) to create a stamped copy of what's currently visible on the canvas. For organization, name this stamped layer "Bokeh 1" and then go to Filter>Blur>Lens Blur.

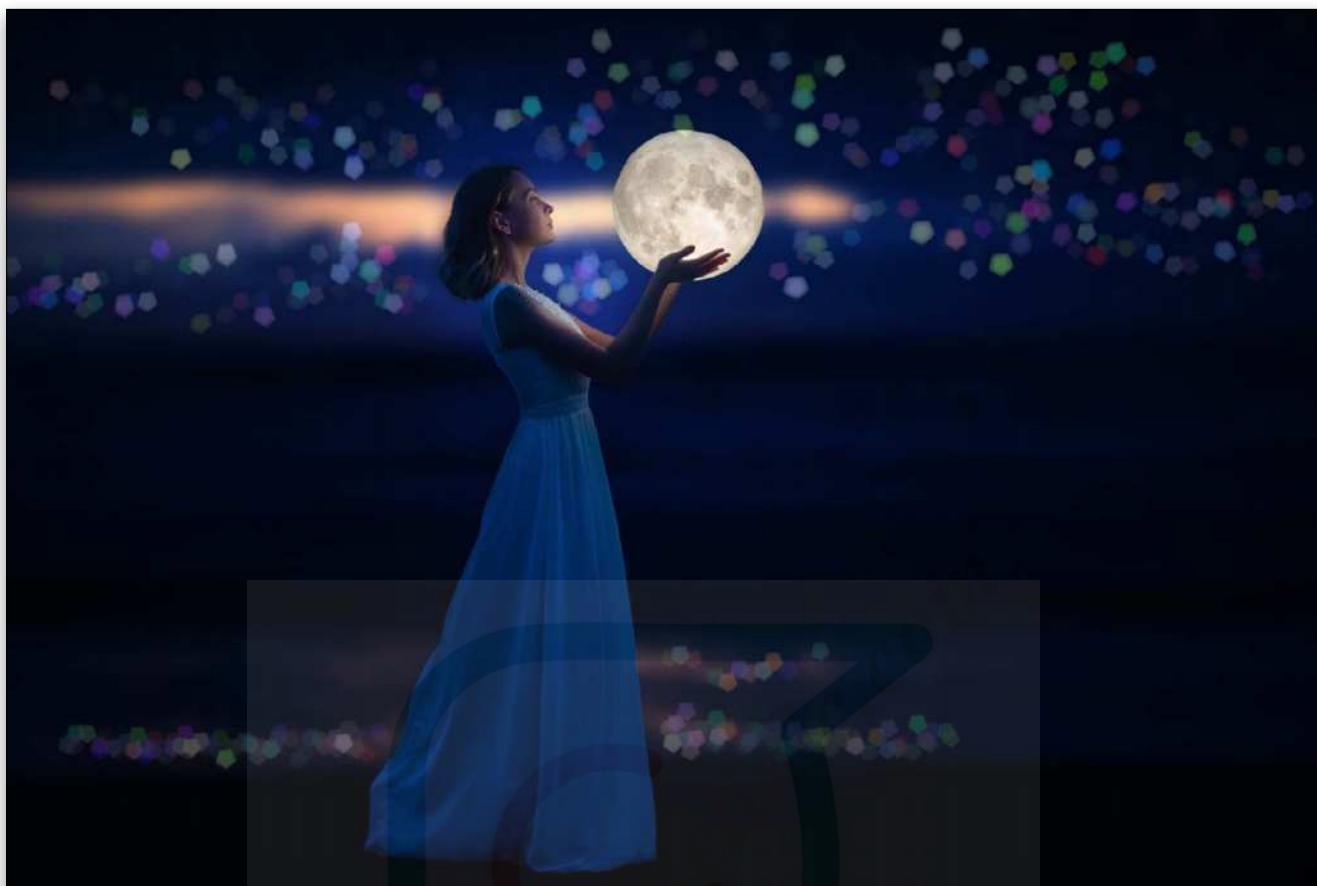
STEP SIX: For this image, I've used the Pentagon shape set to Radius: 80, Blade Curvature: 0, and Rotation: 20. In the Specular Highlights section, set Brightness to 100 and Threshold to 0. Click OK to render the effect back to your layer stack.

Brushed dots against the photo



Brushed dots against black





Lens Blur final result

“It turns out we don’t need an image at all! We can extract the bokeh effect directly from the Lens Blur filter, and use the results, much like we would with the Lens Flare filter, by rendering them to their own layer.”

STEP SEVEN: Back in your regular workspace, turn off the Color Fill and Dots layers, then set the Bokeh 1 layer blending mode to Linear Dodge (Add). This mode ignores black like Screen does, but it’s also a member of the “Special 8” blending modes that respond differently to the Fill slider than the Opacity slider. Colors retain more saturation, as well.

If necessary, lower the Fill value in the Layers panel on the Bokeh 1 layer for a more natural look.

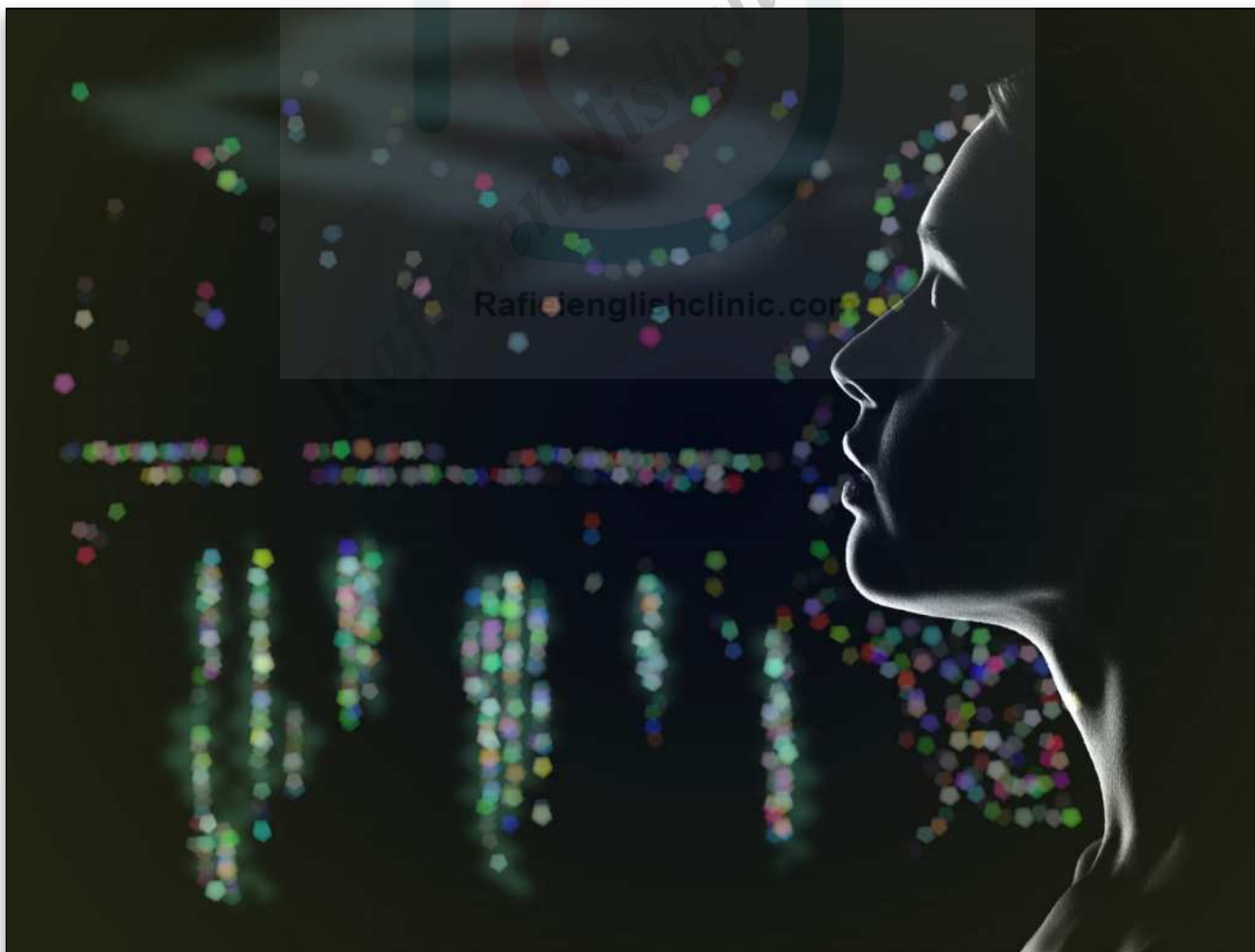
It’s really easy to add more bokeh with slightly different values or painted in different areas: Simply paint on a new blank layer, and repeat the process. When you go to make the stamped layer, make sure only the new painted layer and Color Fill layer are visible. After you apply Lens Blur to the new Bokeh layer, using Linear Dodge (Add) will allow all the individual bokeh layers to interact with each other, and you can control the look however you like. On the next page is another example using the same techniques.



This technique isn't limited to photographs either! You can use the exact same method to add lights to composite fantasy images, illustrations, or any place you want a little razzle-dazzle. ■

 Questions & Comments

Before



After



FUN WITH ISOMETRICS

Sometimes it's fun to get creative with your photos and try something different. When making something like a presentation or poster, you want to make it stand out. Laying images flat in a document can produce good results but giving them a little twist, or in this case, a little angle can make for some fun and interesting effects.



In this tutorial we're going to make a photo layout for a presentation or flyer using isometric angles and framing our images with a Polaroid look to add that little extra something. In the first steps, we'll create a Polaroid-style frame, then we'll use layer comps to set up our images and, lastly, we'll create some actions to make the isometric part quick-and-easy. Let's begin.

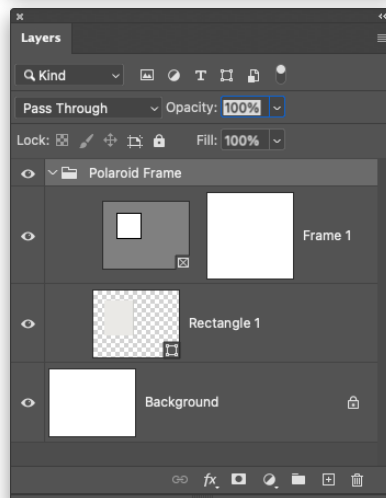
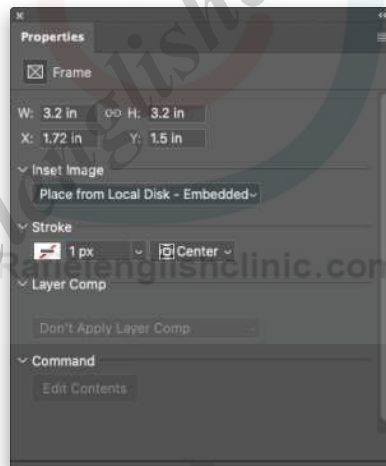
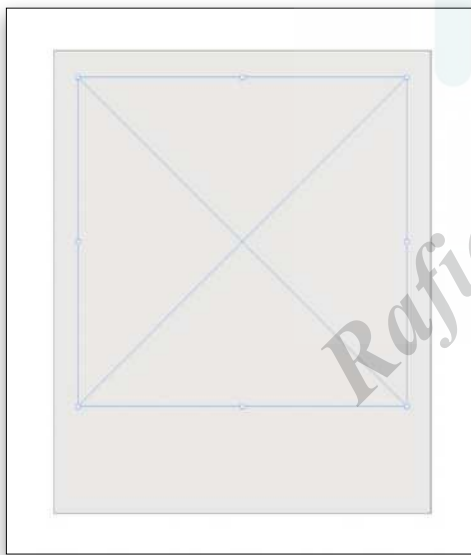
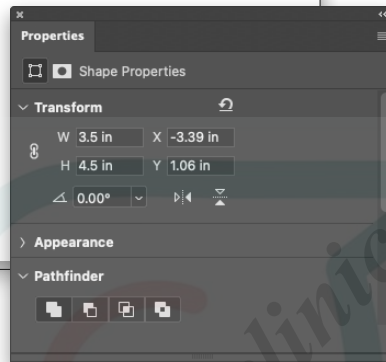
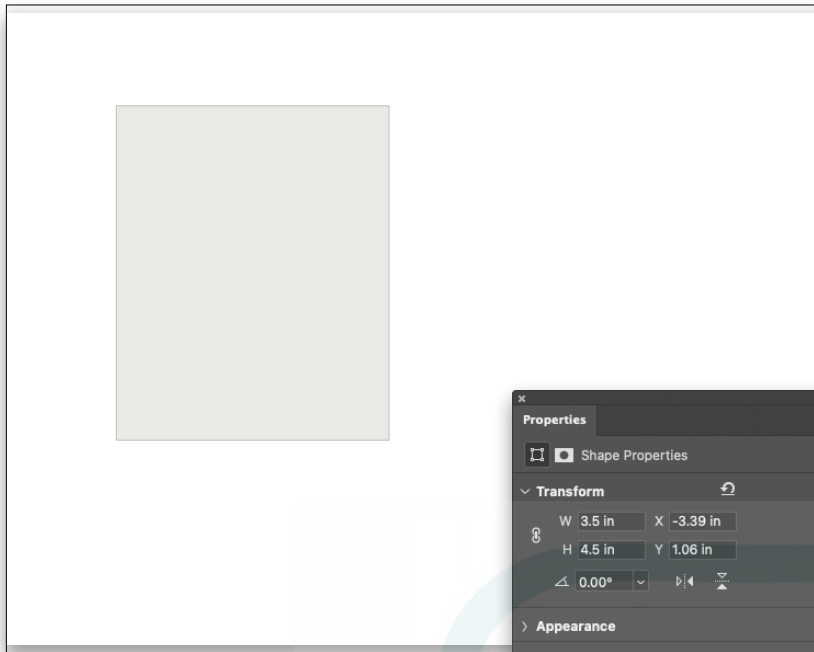
STEP ONE: SET UP THE DOCUMENT

Let's make our base document (File>New) for the overall design. We'll go with 11x8.5" (so it's landscape-oriented)

at 300 ppi. For now, it doesn't matter if it's RGB or CMYK, but we'll assume that this will be a web-based graphic so we'll stick with RGB. I know the settings we're using are for a print-size doc, but if it were to be printed from the web, it would match the printer paper size. You can make it any size you require: inches, millimeters, pixels, etc.

STEP TWO: MAKE A POLAROID FRAME

The next step is to make our Polaroid-style frame. Using the Rectangle tool (U) with its tool mode set to Shape in the Options Bar, draw out a portrait-oriented rectangle.



In the Properties panel (Window>Properties), set its size to 3.5x4.5" (make sure the Width and Height fields aren't linked). We'll reduce the size later for the overall effect, but for now we just want to get the proportions correct. In the Options Bar, change the Fill color to an off-white (#eae9e6) and set the Stroke to black and 1 px.

STEP THREE: POLAROID IMAGE FRAME

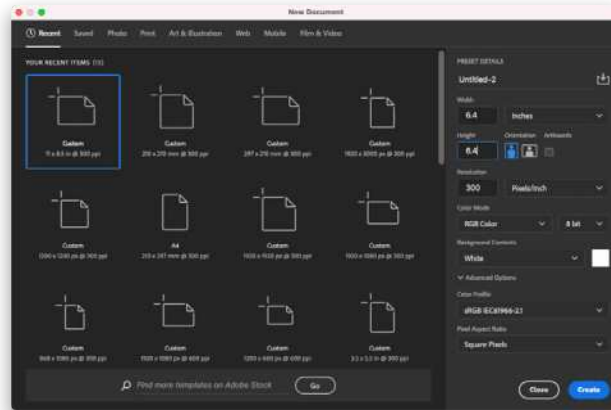
Now grab the Frame tool (K) from the Toolbar, and drag out a square. In the Properties panel, set the size to 3.2x3.2". With the Frame layer active in the Layers panel, Shift-click the Rectangle layer so they're both selected. Switch to the Move tool (V), and click the Align Horizontal Centers icon in the Options Bar.

Make just the Frame layer active and use the Up Arrow key on your keyboard to nudge it up. You can eyeball the gap at the top; the spacing isn't critical. Now that we have our Polaroid-style frame, select both layers again and press Command-G (PC: Ctrl-G) to place them in a layer group. Double-click the name of the group in the Layers panel, and rename it "Polaroid Frame." We'll make copies of this group once our layer comps are set up. Speaking of which...

STEP FOUR: LAYER COMP SETUP

For this particular design, we're using 12 high-res JPEGs from Adobe Stock, but you can use your own images for this. Create a folder for your images somewhere on your computer; it will just make life easier.

Next, create a new Photoshop document that's 6.4x6.4" at 300 ppi (we're making it twice the size of the image frame that we created in the previous step to ensure the image has enough resolution). The quickest way to bring all 12 images into the document is to open the folder on your computer, select all 12 images, and drag them directly onto the document. Then, press Enter 12 times to commit each image to its own layer.



©Adobe Stock

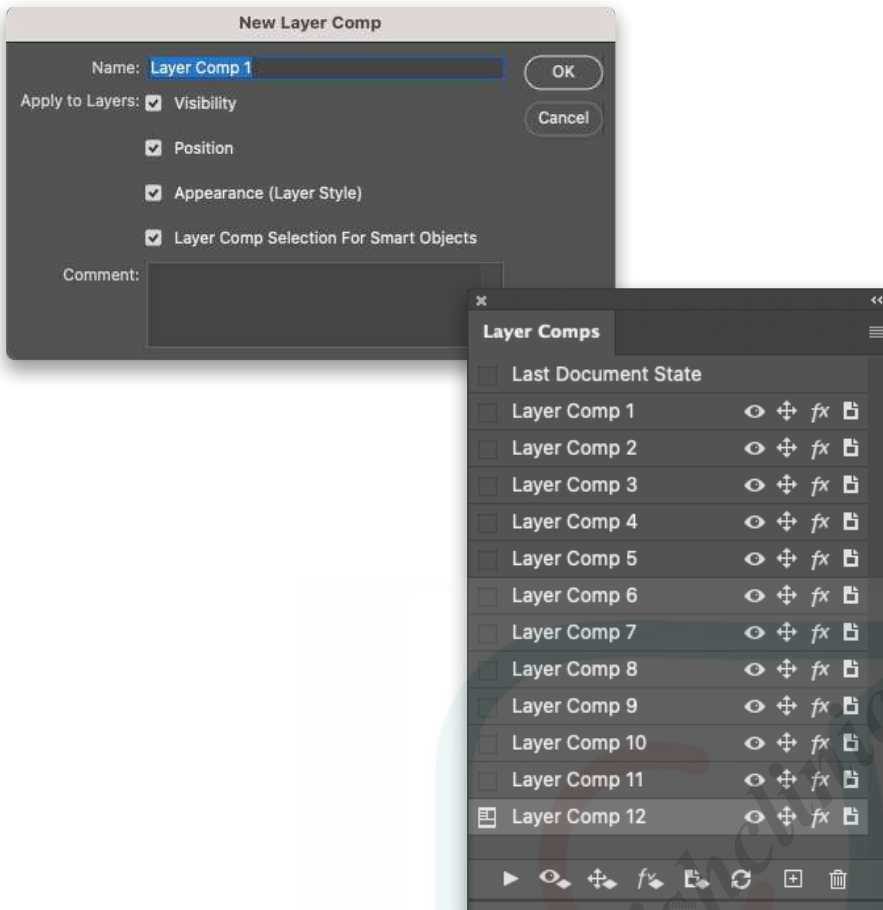
STEP FIVE: RESIZE AND POSITION IMAGES

Use Free Transform (Command-T [PC: Ctrl-T]) to resize and position each image so it fills the frame. Press Enter to commit each transformation. *Tip:* Option-click (PC: Alt-click) the Eye icon of a layer in the Layers panel to make that layer the only visible layer; Option-click (PC: Alt-click) the Eye icon again to make all the other layers visible again.

Once you've done this, you'll have 12 layers plus your Background layer (which you can delete if you so wish). Go to File>Save and save your file as "LayerComps.psd." This is going to be the source file for our layer comps.

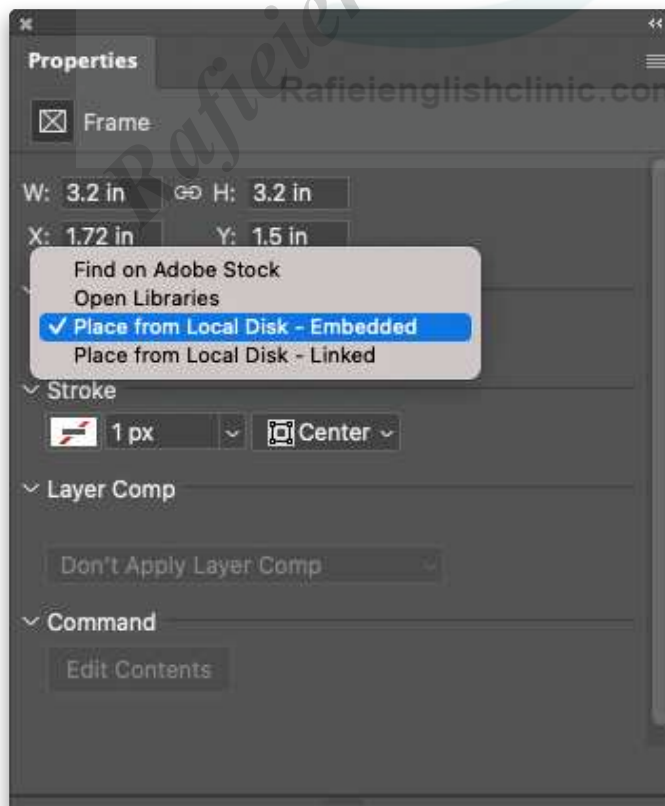


©Adobe Stock/Drazen



**STEP SIX:
MAKE LAYER COMPS**

Next we need to make our layer comps from this file, so go to Window>Layer Comps to open the Layer Comps panel. Starting with only the topmost layer visible, click the + icon at the bottom of the Layer Comps panel, and name your comp (we're using the default names, as it will number the comps in sequence, but you can label each comp with a more descriptive name as needed). Check on all the options in the New Layer Comp dialog (this is just good practice in case you've used any blend modes), and click OK. Then hide that top layer, make the next layer down visible, and create your next layer comp. Work your way down all 12 layers, repeating this process to create 12 layer comps. You can now save the file and close it.



**STEP SEVEN:
PLACE LAYER COMP FILE**

Go back to your working file and click on the Frame layer in the Polaroid Frame layer group. Then in the Properties panel, click on the Inset Image drop-down menu and select Place from Local Disk - Embedded. Navigate to the LayerComps.psd file that you just made in the previous steps and click Place.

STEP EIGHT: ASSIGN LAYER COMP IMAGES

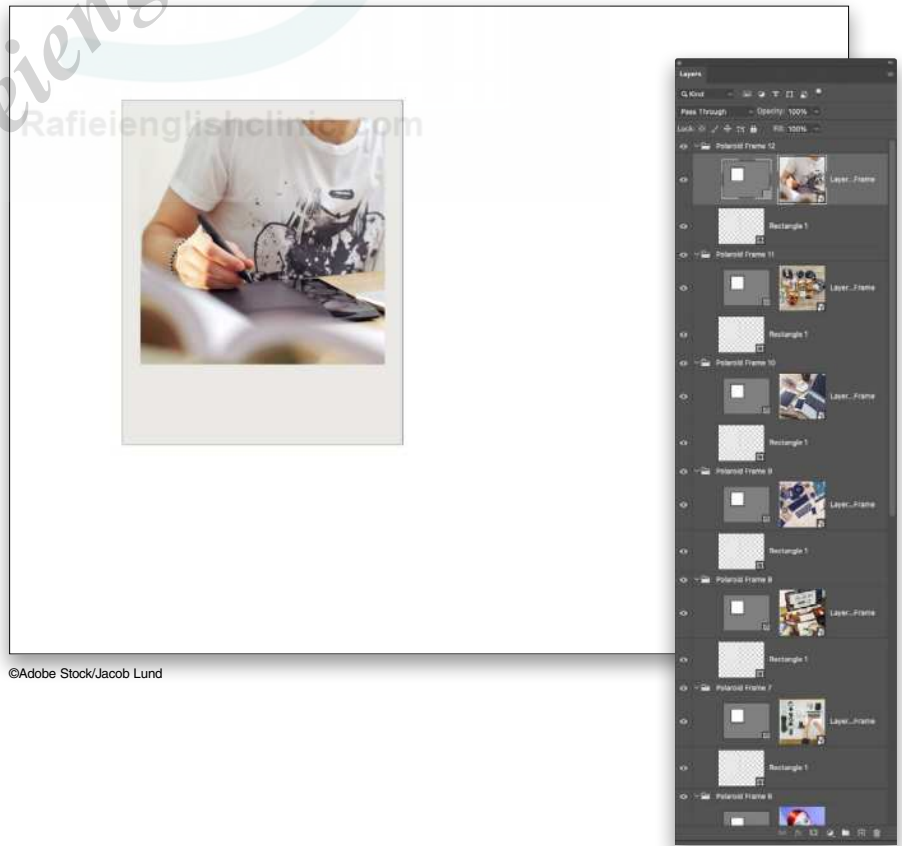
The Properties panel will change showing the name of your Layer-Comps.psd file along with a drop-down menu that contains all the layer comps in the file. So choose Layer Comp 1 and you'll see the image from that layer comp appear in your Polaroid frame.

Now we need to make 11 more copies of the Polaroid Frame group, which you can do by pressing Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J). Rename the groups accordingly. We renamed ours Polaroid Frame 1, 2, 3, etc. to match the number sequencing of our layer comps.

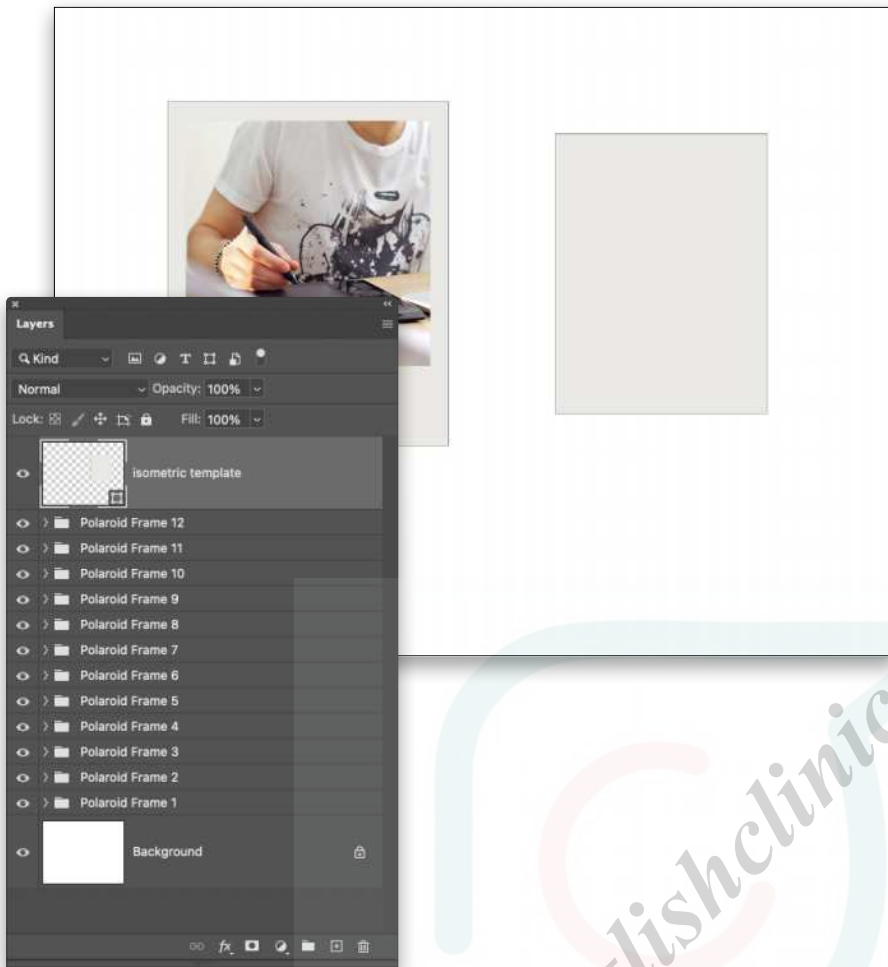


STEP NINE: SET INDIVIDUAL COMPS FOR EACH GROUP

Expand each layer group, click on its Frame layer, go to the Properties panel, and select the layer comp that matches the number of the layer group. You'll see the thumbnails change in the layer stack but, because the frames are stacked on top of each other, you won't see the image in the document change until you change the top layer group.



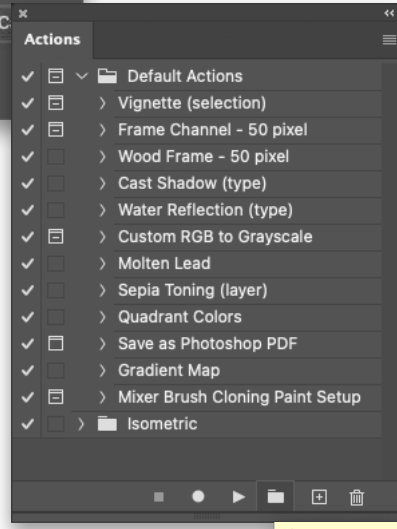
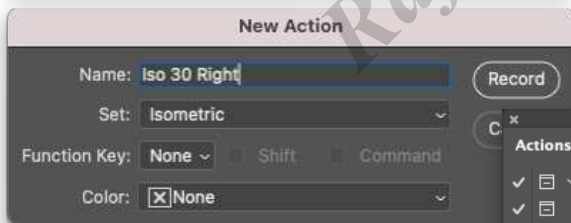
©Adobe Stock/Jacob Lund



STEP 10: GOING ISOMETRIC

Now comes the fun bit: Going isometric. This means we want to add some perspective to our frames, and in this instance, we'll set them to 30° angles. But how do we do this? Well, we'll need to make some transformations, but to speed up operations, we'll create an action.

With the top layer group active in the Layers panel, use the Rectangle tool to draw a rectangle shape near the Polaroid frame. The dimensions aren't essential; we just need a shape that we can transform to create our action. Name this layer "isometric template."



STEP 11: CREATE NEW ACTION

With the isometric template layer active in the Layers panel, go to Window>Actions to open the Actions panel. Click on the Create New Set icon (folder) at the bottom of the panel, name it "Isometric," and click OK. Then click the Create New Action icon (+), call it "Iso 30 Right," select the Isometric set, and then click Record.

Create new set



STEP 12: RECORD STEPS IN ACTION

With both the isometric template layer and Rectangle tool active, go to Edit>Free Transform Path and you'll now see some settings in the Options Bar at the top. Follow these steps:

- Set the Angle to 30°.
- Set the Height to -30°.

Press Enter to commit the transformation, and when Photoshop warns you that this operation will turn a live shape into a regular path, click Yes.

Click the Stop Recording icon (square) at the bottom of the Actions panel.

Let's go ahead and build three more actions while we're at it that will create various 30° rotations (see examples above). We're not going to use these in this tutorial, but they'll be fun for you to experiment with on your own. Press Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z) to reset the rectangle into its original position, and then create the actions using the names and the Free Transform Path settings shown at the right:

ISO 30 LEFT

- Set the Angle to -30°.
- Set the Height to 30°.
- Press Enter to commit the transformation.
- Click the Stop Recording icon in the Actions panel.

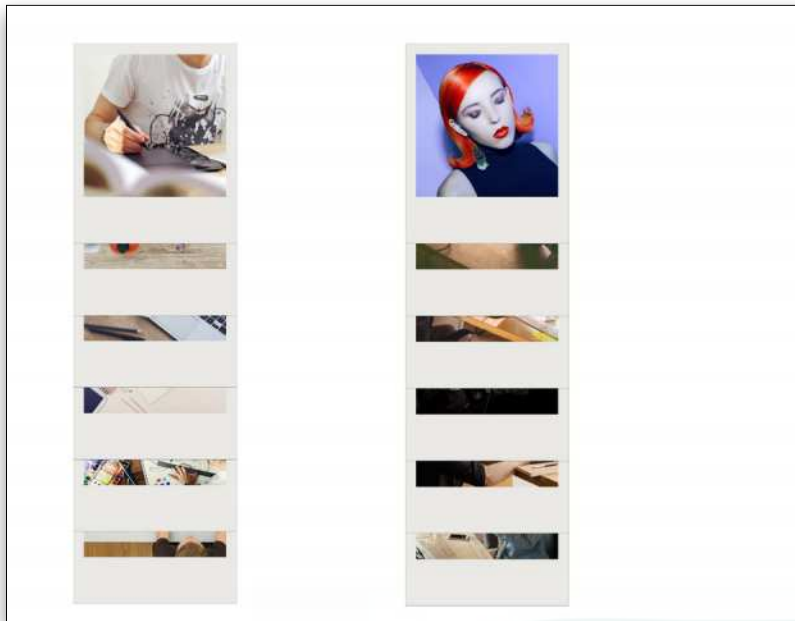
ISO 30 UP LEFT

- Set the Angle to -30°.
- Set the Height to -30°.
- Press Enter to commit the transformation.
- Click the Stop Recording icon in the Actions panel.

ISO 30 UP RIGHT

- Set the Angle to 30°.
- Set the Height to 30°.
- Press Enter to commit the transformation.
- Click the Stop Recording icon in the Actions panel.

You can now delete the isometric template layer that we used to make the actions.



STEP 13: RESIZE AND MOVE FRAMES

Before we do anything else, Right-click each layer group and select Convert to Smart Object. This will allow us to resize the frames without loss of quality. Then, click on the top frame layer and Shift-click the bottom frame layer in the Layers panel so they're all selected. Use Free Transform to reduce the size proportionally, visualizing the size you want for your final frames, and press Enter to commit the transformation.

Now we need to select each frame layer and use the Move tool to position it on the document so that we can see a portion of each frame. Here we made two columns of six. Select all the layers for each row in the Layers panel, and with the Move tool still active, click the Distribute Vertically icon to space them evenly.

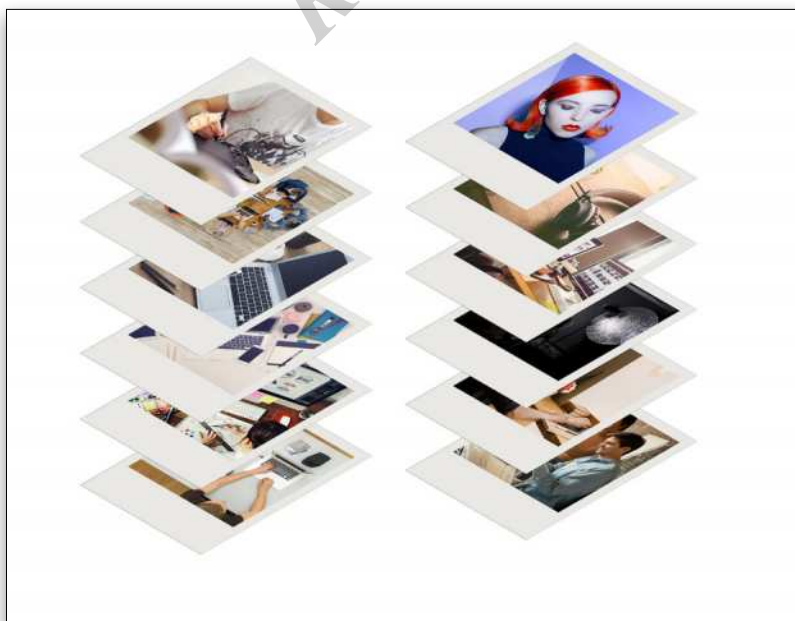


STEP 14: RUN THE ISO 30 RIGHT ACTION

With all the frame layers selected in the Layers panel, go to the Actions panel, click on the Iso 30 Right action, and click the Play Selection icon (small triangle).

STEP 15: LAYOUT ADJUSTMENT

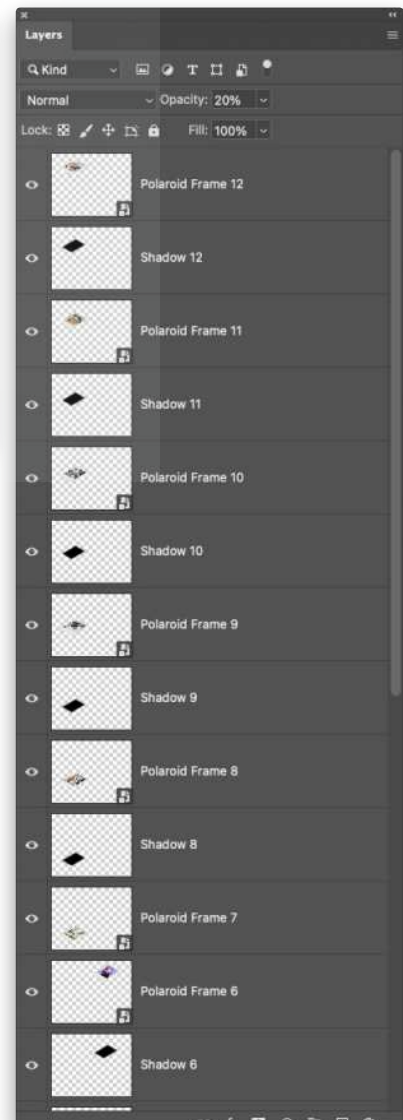
Now that the isometric transformation action is applied, move the frames around to create space between each of them. With the Move tool active, you can Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) on a frame directly in the document to make it the active layer. After you've roughly positioned each frame, Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) the top frame in one of the stacks, and then Shift-Command-click (PC: Shift-Ctrl-click) the other five frames in the same stack to select all of them. In the Options Bar, click the Align Left Edges icon followed by the Distribute Horizontally icon, and then move the stack into position. Repeat this process for the other stack.



STEP 16: DROP SHADOW FOR DEPTH

To add some additional depth we'll add shadows but we can't use the Drop Shadow layer style because the way it's applied wouldn't be realistic in this case. Instead, make a duplicate of the top-left frame layer, Right-click it in the Layers panel, choose Rasterize Layer, and rename it "Shadow." Go to Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation, drop the Lightness to -100 to make it black, and click OK. Using Free Transform, resize it to about 3/4 of its original size, and press Enter.

Now go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, set the Radius to 20 px, and click OK. Drop the layer Opacity to 20%. Position this in the layer stack between the top two frame layers, and then use the Move tool to position it in the image so that it looks as if the top image is casting a shadow on the image below it. Make copies of the Shadow layer, place them between each of the frames, and then use the Move tool to position each copy in the image. These "shadows" give a more realistic look of space between the photos.



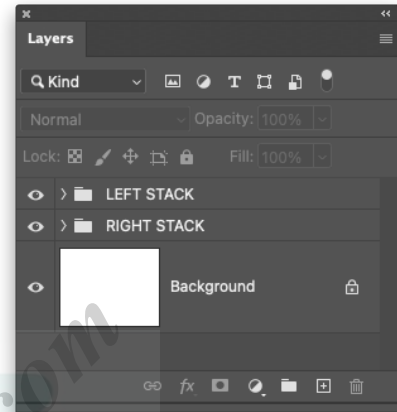
STEP 17: LAYOUT DESIGN

To make life easier, group the six frames on the left, then the six on the right. We've renamed the groups "LEFT STACK" and "RIGHT STACK."

As mentioned earlier, because they're smart objects you can resize the stacks as needed without losing quality. Also, because we used layer comps, you can change the image that appears in any of the Polaroid frames instead of having to move the frames around. Just double-click the smart object thumbnail to open a temporary .psb file where you'll see the Frame and Rectangle layers inside the Polaroid Frame group. Click on the Frame layer and, in the Properties panel, select a different layer comp. When you save and close the temporary file, your main working file will update to show the new layer comp.

Finally, add some design content to make your flyer or web graphic, and now you have a great-looking and more creative editable layout!

I hope you enjoyed learning how to use this isometric style to enhance your designs. You can try this on any shape, image, or even type (which stays live!) to create stunning flyers, designs, and web and social graphics. ■



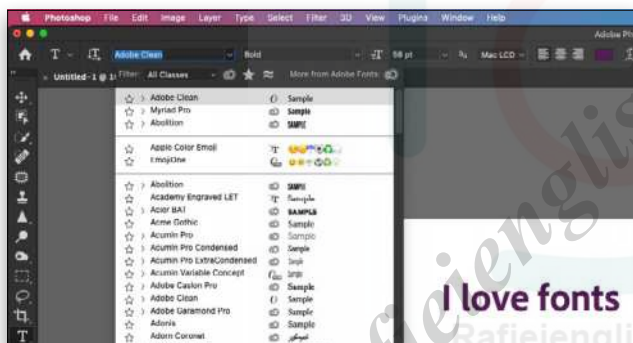
Questions & Comments



Q. How do I add fonts to Photoshop?

A. Whenever I hear this question, it gives me flashbacks to decades ago when you actually installed fonts into individual applications on the PC. Luckily, those days are long gone and now when you install fonts into your operating system or font manager, they're generally available to all your applications.

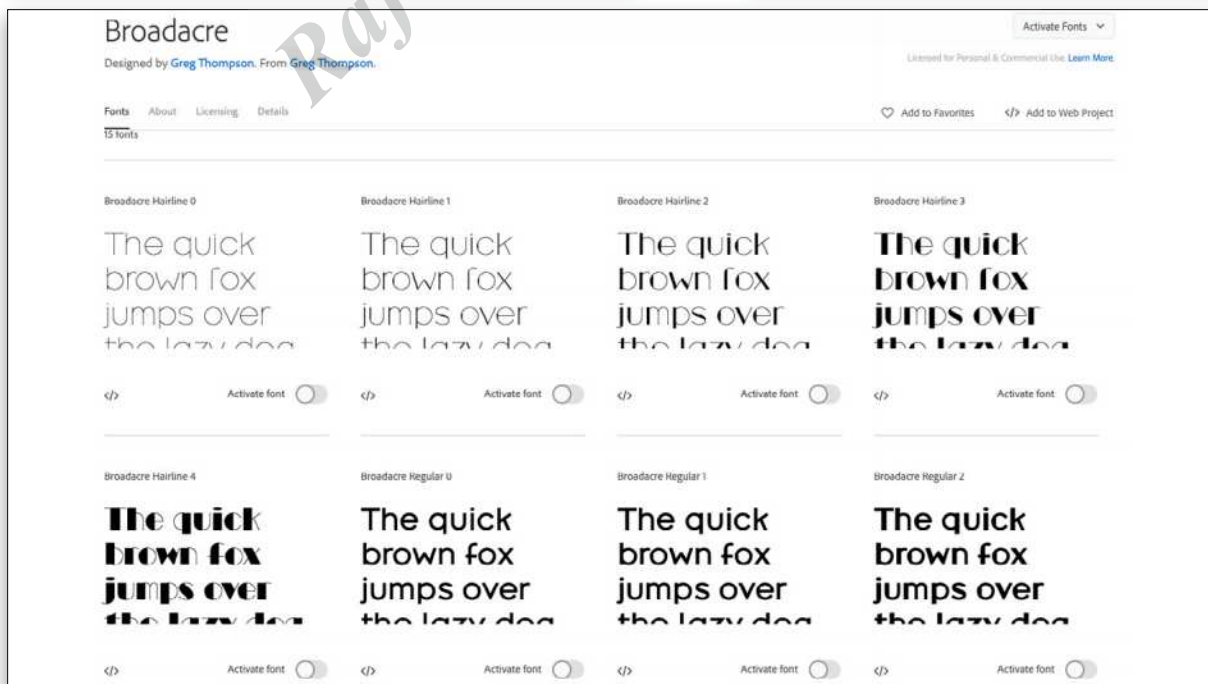
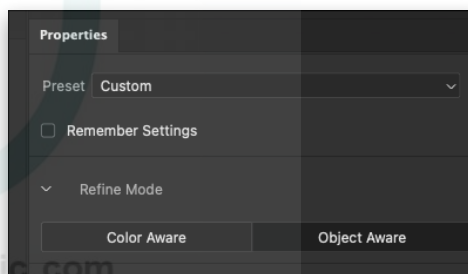
As a Creative Cloud user of Photoshop, you have access to fonts as part of your membership (depending on your CC membership). The next time you want something new in the way of a font choice, go ahead and type your text. With the Type tool (T) active, pop down the font menu in the Options Bar, and choose More from Adobe Fonts at the top right (you can also go to Type>More from Adobe Fonts no matter which tool is active). This will take you to the Adobe Fonts website.



From there, you can browse fonts and activate the ones you want to use. Once activated, there's nothing else you need to do other than returning to Photoshop and choosing your newly activated font from the Font menu. It's quite awesome the way it just works! As mentioned, these fonts are also available to your other applications.

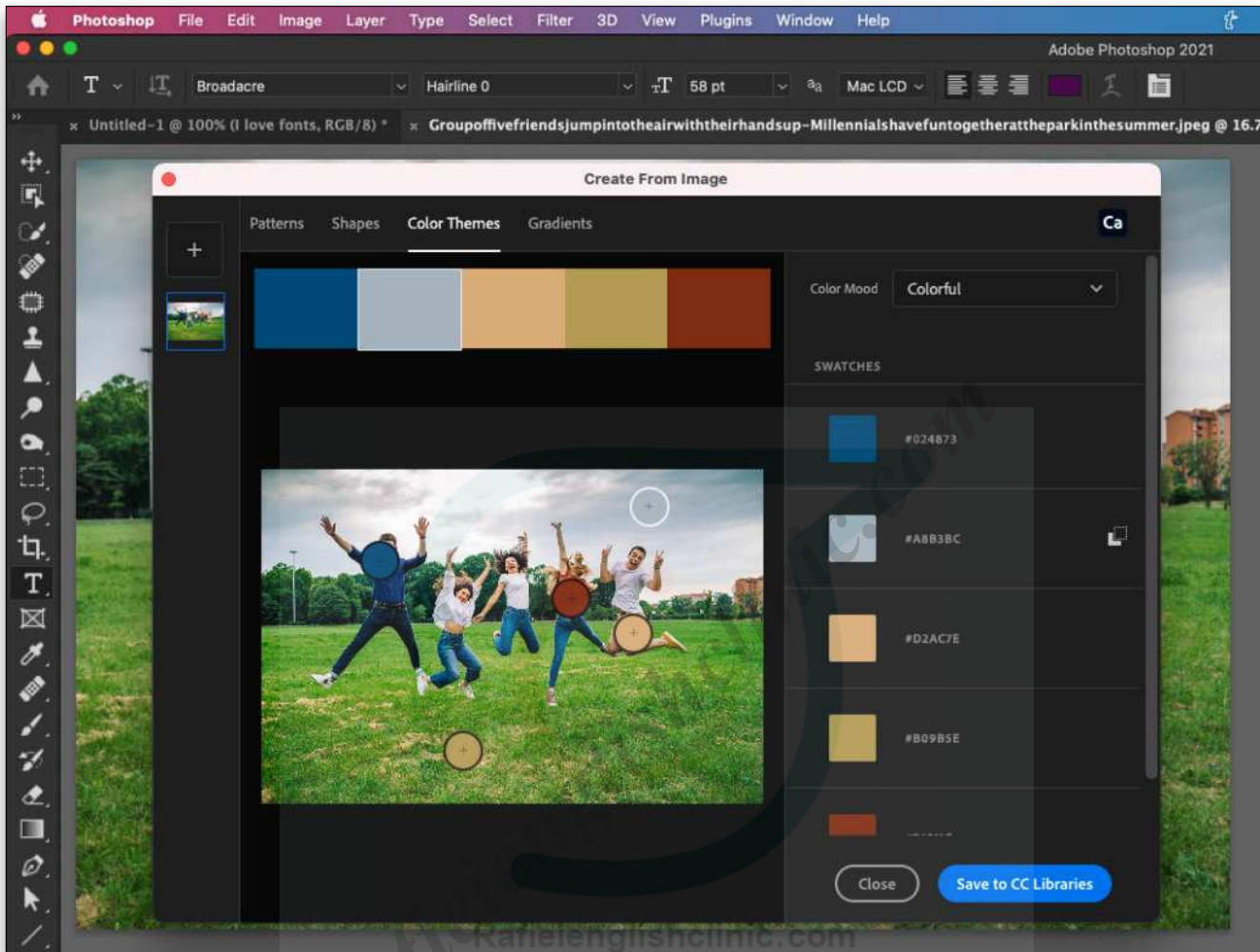
Q. In the Select and Mask Workspace now, I see a choice between Color Aware and Object Aware. What's the difference and which one should I use?

A. They added this choice recently, and it's a good thing because it helps you depending on what type of subject you're selecting. If you're selecting a relatively simple subject with contrasting backgrounds, then use Color Aware in the Properties panel. If your subject is more complex/difficult or you're masking out hair then use Object Aware.



Questions & Comments

ALL IMAGES BY TERRY WHITE EXCEPT WHERE NOTED



Q. How can I create a color palette from my image?

A. Usually, when you want to do graphic design that includes a hero or main image, it would be nice if you could match the rest of the content to the colors used in the image. Having the text, borders, vectors, etc., be the same colors that are already in the image helps to create harmony. In Photoshop, it's now easy to build a color theme directly from your image. When you have one of your CC Libraries active in the Libraries panel (Window>Libraries) there's a + sign at the bottom of the panel. Click it and choose Create from Image to bring up Adobe Capture.

Click on the Color Themes tab and you'll see a color theme with five colors that have been chosen from your image. You can move the targets around the preview to pick different colors for more variety. Once you're happy with your color theme choices,

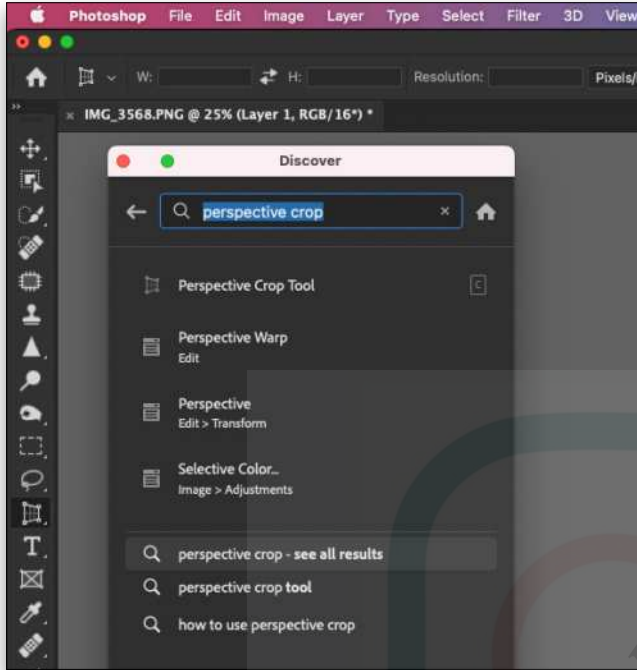
click Save to CC Libraries, and the newly created theme will be saved to the current CC Library in the Libraries panel. Now you can use those colors on anything you add to the design such as text.

Q. I'm always forgetting where certain tools and features that I don't use regularly are located. Is there a way for Photoshop to tell me where they are?

A. You're definitely not alone. Sometimes I have to watch my own tutorial videos to remember how to do something that I don't do every day. Luckily, Photoshop has your back and can tell you where things are if you just ask, or should I say search.

At the far right of your Options Bar (at the top), there's a search tool (it looks like a magnifying glass). Click on it and the Discover dialog will appear where you can pretty much ask Photoshop anything. The

results will start to appear as you type. If it's a tool, just click on the results and Photoshop will select the tool for you. If it's a technique, then the results will likely include tutorials on how to do the thing you asked for.



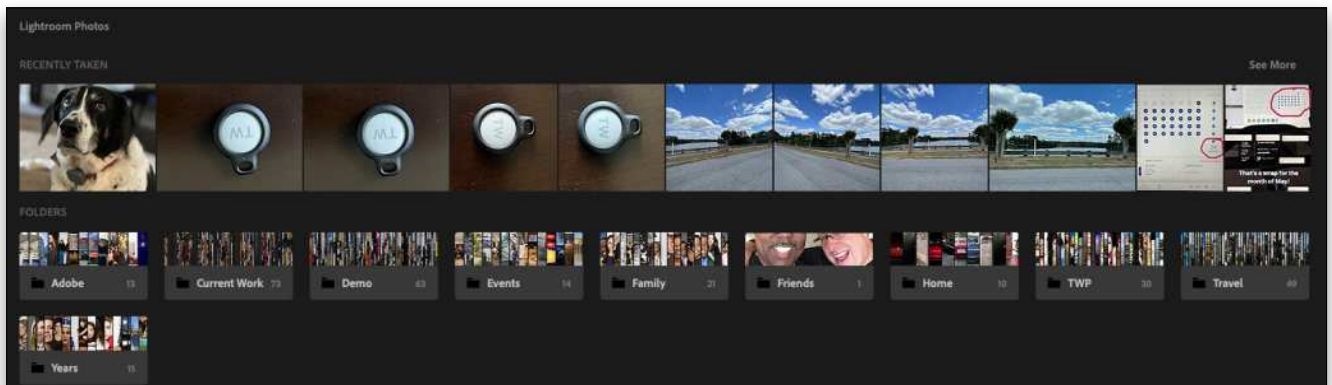
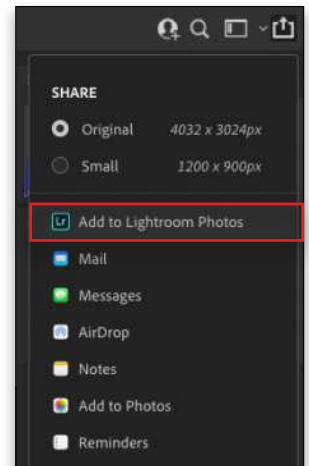
Q. I know that I can edit my Lightroom photos in Photoshop if I initiate the edit from Lightroom, but is there a way to access my photos when I'm already in Photoshop?

A. Round-tripping edits from Lightroom/Lightroom Classic to Photoshop and back is one of my favorite Lightroom features. There are times, however, when I'm already working in Photoshop and I'd love to use a photo that I know I have in Lightroom.

At that point, Lightroom may not even be open and it would be a drag to have to launch Lightroom just to find the photo and choose Edit in Photoshop. Fortunately, there's a way to bypass all of this and open the image directly in Photoshop even if Lightroom isn't open. It does involve one Lightroom/Lightroom Classic feature to be in place first: The image(s) you want to open must already be synced to the cloud.

If you've synced the photos you want to the cloud from Lightroom or the smart previews from Lightroom Classic, then yes you can open them directly in Photoshop. If Photoshop is already open and you've bypassed the Home screen, just click on the Home icon in the upper-left corner to bring up the Home screen. Then click on Lightroom Photos under Your Work. This will load your most recent photos and all of your synced albums/collections.

Navigate to the photo you want to open and double-click on it. It will download from the cloud and open right in Photoshop. You can edit as you like. Note that any changes you make *will not* affect the photo in Lightroom. It's as if it opens an unlinked copy of the image. If you'd like to send your edited photo back to Lightroom, you can do so by first saving the image you edited to your local hard drive, then choose Add to Lightroom Photos under the Share menu on the far right side of the Options Bar at the top of your screen. ■



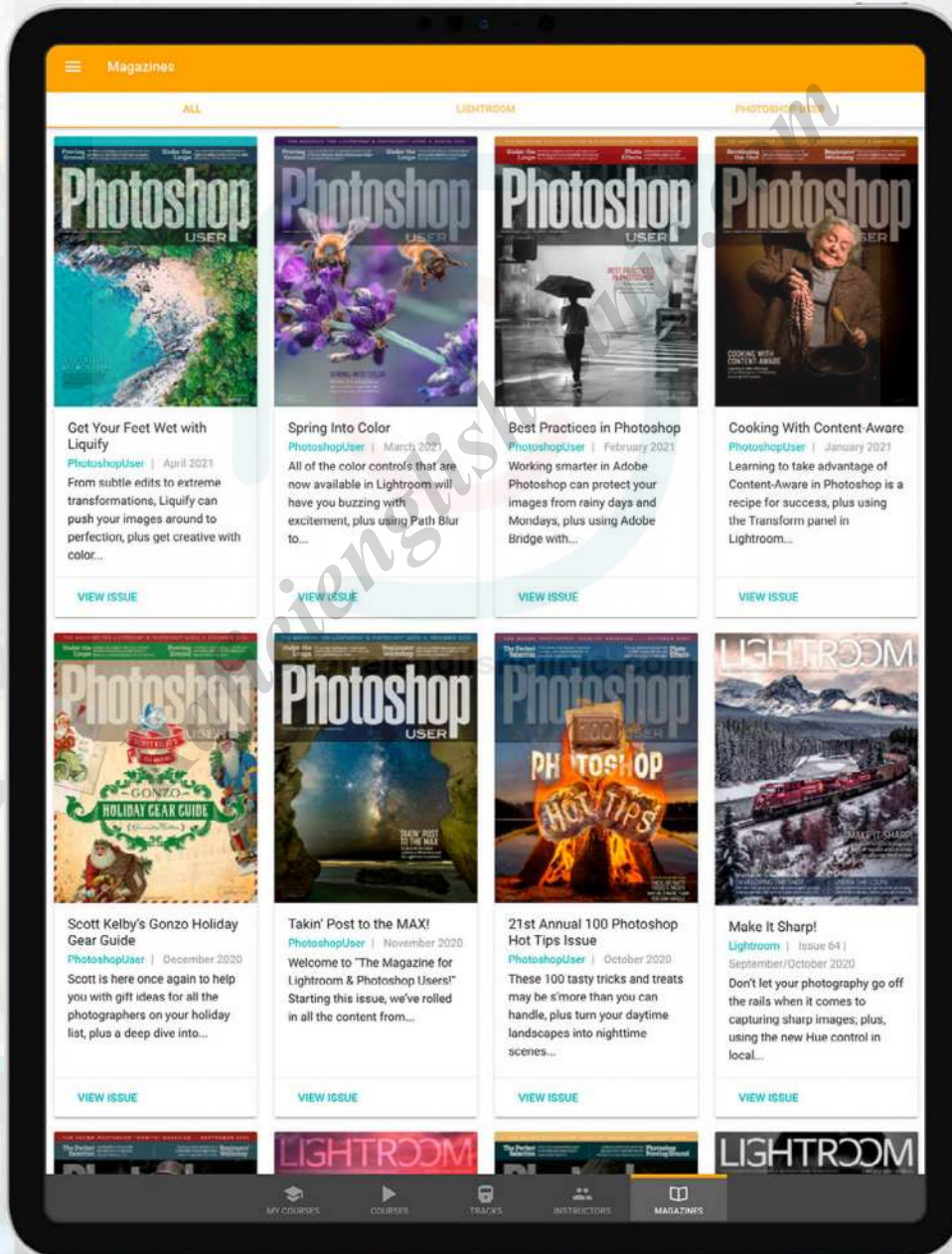
If you have a Photoshop question that you'd like Terry White to answer in the pages of *Photoshop User* magazine, send it to letters@photoshopper.com.

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where photography clicks



Monogram Creative Console

▶ *Studio Console Kit + Slider Module Hardware Controller* | Review by Scott Valentine

Monogram (formerly Palette Gear) introduced its next evolution of modular hardware controllers in late 2020. What sets Monogram apart from other hardware controllers is the ability to move physical components around to suit your environment and workflow preferences. This new offering takes the high-quality aluminum housing from the previous generation and adds updated style and controls.

Modules consist of sliders, knobs, buttons, and a new Orbiter module that brings a large shuttle ring and D-pad functionality, enabling 3D camera controls as well as features such as a color picker or panning the canvas.

Each module can be individually assigned one or more functions for a given application, and any supported application can have multiple profiles. For example, in Lightroom you may have one profile for working with the Library module and another for working with the Develop tools. Everything about the modules can be configured using the included Monogram Creator app (brand-new for this release). The Monogram Creator app also recognizes when you switch application focus, and automatically loads the default profile for that app.

Once a module has been assigned a function for a given piece of software, it retains that assignment even when disconnected and reattached. Strong rare earth magnets are used to snap the kit together, though they're not strong enough to lift the entire assembly in one piece. The Monogram Creator app shows you a map of the current layout that updates in real time as you move components around. This makes it much easier to experiment with different configurations, or to take only a few pieces when traveling.

An impressive number of configurations are possible, including adding more components or paring down to bare essentials for a travel kit. Customizable LED halos can be assigned in the Monogram Creator software for visual identification, and the

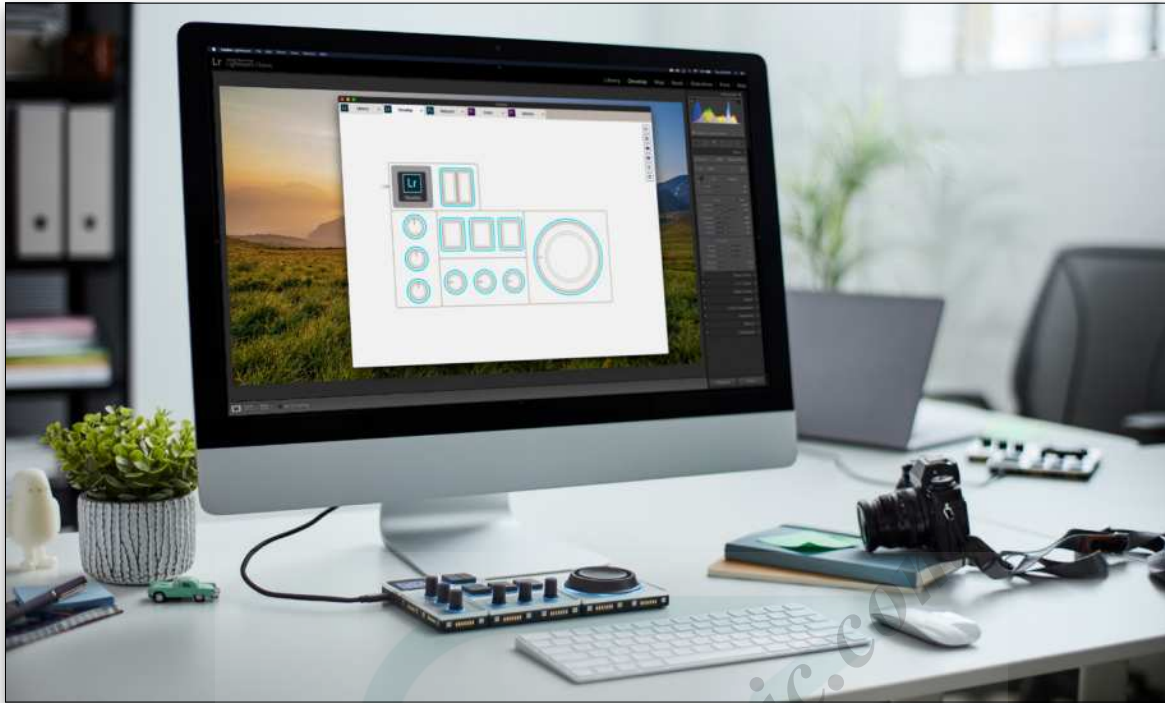


Company: Monogram

Price: As Tested—Studio Console: \$499; Slider Module: \$119

Hot: Configurable; solid; true hands-on control

Not:



Monogram Core can display the current application's icon or a custom graphic.

Using the Monogram Creative Console is an amazing experience. The hardware feels professional and solid and, within a few minutes, it becomes a natural extension of working with Photoshop and other applications. Knob, slider, and button modules come in a three-up configuration as opposed to the single-unit pieces featured on Palette Gear. Knobs can also be pressed down and have sufficient resistance to prevent accidental clicks. Similarly, the buttons have a great feel and are spaced apart to avoid hitting two at once.

A standout element is the Orbiter. In testing, we used the ring for zoom control in Photoshop, image highlighting in Bridge and Lightroom, and scrolling in other apps. Its size makes precision easy without giving up speed for tearing through large collections or many pages. We used the pad in Photoshop for panning while zoomed in, speeding up a typical retouching workflow by leaps and bounds.

Experimenting with different physical layouts is extremely easy; there's no need to shut down the Monogram Creator app or to disconnect the core module. Simply remove a module and snap it into place elsewhere. During testing, we connected the original Palette Gear hardware and experienced zero issues; everything is immediately

recognized. This is great news for those who bought the previous generation.

Control over Photoshop, Lightroom, and Bridge functions is very smooth and the Monogram Creator app almost instantly swaps between applications on the fly. Going from word-processing apps to Photoshop to web browsers to music production software presented no problem; so long as there's a profile for the software you're using, Monogram Creator will update quickly and precisely. Scrolling in Lightroom and Bridge was smooth with the Orbiter, and made the process of reviewing multiple images much easier than clicking back and forth.

Any computer-based task where you're constantly working with value-driven functions for expression and control would get a serious boost from the Monogram Creative Console. It pairs especially nicely with a Wacom tablet, and can be quickly modified to sit on a MIDI keyboard for real-time expression control. The value in using external hardware is to enable better tactile feel and body memory so that the user is able to focus more on the task at hand than the interface, and this is where Monogram Creative Console kits excel.

There are three kits available, ranging from \$399 to \$799, or individual modules can be purchased from \$99 to \$149. Each kit ships with a USB-C cable, and the Monogram Creator software can be used with Windows or macOS. ■



Nik Collection 4

► **New U Point Technology Much More Intuitive** | Review by Erik Vlietinck

The new version of the Nik Collection contains a good deal of new features that will please many photographers. Viveza and Silver Efex have been revamped to a deep level. Both plug-ins now feature a modern interface that contrasts the one that you'll find in the other plug-ins. The access to presets has been made more efficient, and creating and sharing presets has been made simple.

DxO takes U Point technology to its least-complicated implementation ever. You can now tune the mask with two Color Selectivity sliders. The new approach allows for time savings because you don't need to create negative control points to keep the mask from bleeding into areas you don't want to affect.

Another major novelty for all plug-ins in the Collection is that it's possible to incorporate Control Points into personalized presets. It means, for example, that you can apply a color effect and a blurred background to several portraits simultaneously.

The Control Points themselves are now easier to use with only one slider on the HUD itself, making it easier to judge an effect. A boon is that you can rename them.

A new Meta Presets filter type has been added for Adobe Photoshop users. You access it from the Nik Selective Tool, and it contains Photoshop actions combining filters and settings of several Nik Collection plug-ins into one.

The Last Edit function now includes Adobe Lightroom Classic. In addition, the new Smart Copy & Paste feature lets users selectively re-apply the effect of a plug-in to one or several images directly in Lightroom without having to launch the software suite's interface.

Finally, Nik Silver Efex now includes the ClearView technology that DxO PhotoLab users know when they want to remove haze and enhance local contrast. ■

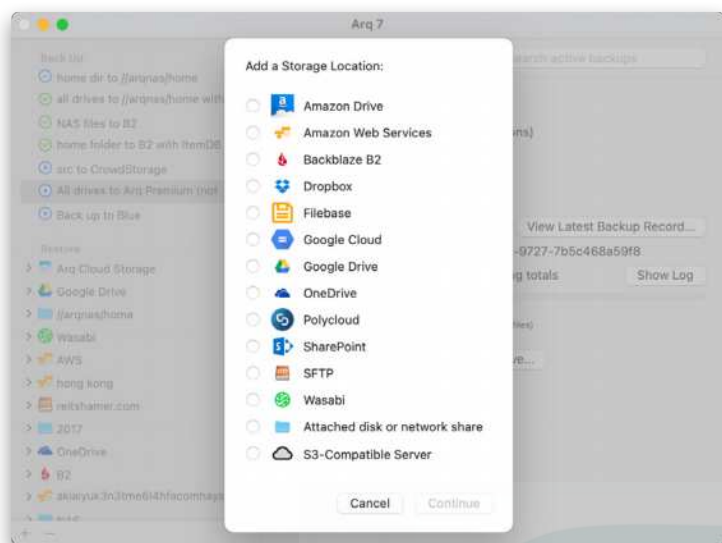
4.0 ★★★★★

Company: DxO

Price: \$149; Upgrade: \$79

Hot: Simple U Point-affected area tuning; Meta Presets; Control Point renaming

Not: Only Viveza and Silver Efex have been totally revamped so far.



Arq 7 Backup

► *Backup Software that Supports a Large Number of Cloud Services* | Review by Erik Vlietinck

Arq 7 backs up to a large number of cloud backup services, attached disks, NAS, and more, and even supports multiple types of backup storage simultaneously. The app backs up your files with strong, end-to-end encryption if you don't turn off the setting that's on by default. Arq uses filesystem snapshot technology to make perfect, point-in-time backups of your files, even if they're changing during the backup process.

Arq 7 integrates with many different cloud providers, including Backblaze B2, Dropbox, Google (Cloud and Drive), OneDrive, and more. It supports SFTP, Wasabi, and S3 compatible servers. The app offers automatic NAS handling, which means it mounts network shares for you. Even more importantly, you can select an option that allows it to back up even when you're not logged in, and even for running multiple backup jobs in parallel.

I tested Arq 7 with an external drive. Arq 7 is flexible in the way you set it up, and it's incredibly fast with a local drive. Setting up a plan is straightforward but it can be fine-tuned to a granular level, including preventing backups from running over specific network interfaces or Wi-Fi networks, limiting bandwidth usage and retention, to name but a few options.

Arq 7 uses data compression, applies deduplication to ensure only unique data is stored, and uses a block-level incremental backup. A block-level incremental backup is more efficient than a file-level incremental backup, because it finds the portions of a file that have been changed since the last backup and copies over only the data blocks that have been modified instead of the entire file.

It also applies versioning, which means it keeps multiple versions of your files. Finally, the app features file restoration right from within Arq 7, so you won't have to download ZIP files from a network to start a restore process. ■

5.0 ★★★★★

Company: Arq Backup

Price: \$4999/year; \$5999/year with 1TB storage included

Hot: Encryption; "real" backup; fast; number of cloud services supported

Not:



BenQ SW271C

► *A Photographer's Display* | Review by Steve Baczewski

I review displays from the perspective of a photographer, taking into consideration a variety of parameters, including expense, ergonomics, build, etc; but, if there were a hierarchy of the most important features, color accuracy would be at the top. Does the screen act as a reliable predictor of what my prints will look like? How wide is the color gamut and color space? Is the screen uniformly lit from edge to edge, top to bottom? Further down the hierarchy, but still important, are things such as the angle of view and screen movement.

BenQ includes a hood with the SW line and, while not essential, it acknowledges BenQ's attention to detail to create the best possible viewing conditions. A comprehensive, logically organized On Screen Manager (OSM) makes life easier with practical features that increase the screen's versatility and facilitates calibration. The OSM is comprehensive with wonderful features such as Gamut Duo, which allows you to view two different color spaces simultaneously. I'm sure discerning readers will have their own priorities, such as connectivity, but in my opinion, BenQ checks all the boxes with the high-end SW271C.

The SW271C is a 10-bit, 27", matte coated, 4K (3840x2160) display with a 16:9 aspect ratio. It has a Delta E value of <2, and it's 163 ppi. It uses an LED backlight with a 1000:1 contrast ratio, a brightness of 350 candelas, and its IPS panel achieves approximately 170° viewing angle, making it ideal for a collaborative work environment. The light from edge to edge is uniform with little deviation, and at 4K there's lots of detail when you zoom in to make adjustments.

4.5 ★★★★★

Company: BenQ Corporation
Price: \$1,599.99
Rating: 4.5
Hot: Color accuracy; light uniformity; relatively inexpensive
Not: Poor arrangement of ports



Of significance is the use of a built-in 16-bit LUT and, when used with BenQ's proprietary calibration software, Palette Master Element, it directly calibrates the screen and bypasses your computer's graphics card. It achieves 99% of Adobe RGB color space, 100% sRGB, and 90% DCI-P3. Directly out of the box, the display was correctly calibrated from the factory. The practical side of a built-in LUT is that you can make and store more than one calibration profile to accommodate different situations, such as different color temperatures. The SW271C can store three profiles.

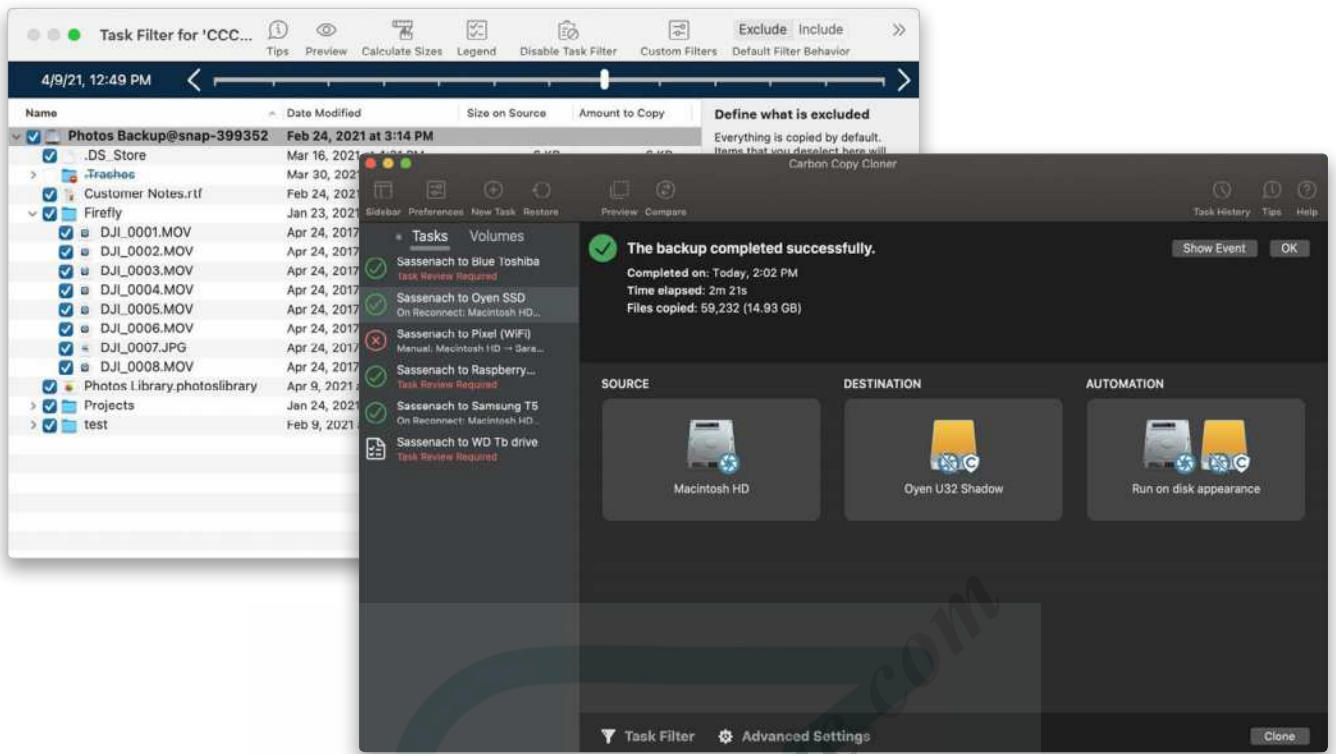
Once calibrated, the screen-to-print match is very accurate. Further, BenQ now includes new soft-proofing software called Paper Color Sync that correlates selected printers and paper for best screen-to-print matching.

The display is solidly designed with a new, larger base to maximize sturdiness. With an eye to detail, there's a handle on top to facilitate moving. Assembly is easy, and all of its movements are smooth. It tilts, swivels, and rotates from landscape to portrait modes and, when set in position, it doesn't drift. It also comes with the company's second-generation,

customizable, USB Hotkey Puck that lets you program the display accessing OSM features such as switching between color and black-and-white modes.

Connectivity is abundant. On the back are 2 HDMI 2.0 ports, a DisplayPort, and a USB Type-C port (hence the C at the end of SW271C) that delivers 60 Watts to power a laptop or other device. Although both the HDMI and USB-C ports will deliver 4K, the HDMI connectivity clips some colors according to tech support. Also included is a headphone jack, and a USB Type-B port. There are no built-in speakers. On the side is a SD card slot and two fast USB 3.1 Type-A ports. These side ports, especially the card reader, are very practical but the ergonomics are poor because the ports are situated at an angle that makes them difficult to access. That includes the ports on the back (like most other displays) that are always facing down instead of logically facing directly at the user, which would make access simpler.

The SW271C is a wonderful, sophisticated display aimed at photographers and graphic artists who prioritize color accuracy and detail. ■



Carbon Copy Cloner 6 for Mac

► *Faster Cloning and Even Better Protection Against Bit Rot* | Review by Erik Vlietinck

Carbon Copy Cloner (CCC) has been upgraded and it's worth every cent of the upgrade price. Version 6 turns CCC into a basic offloading application, and it all starts with a next-generation file copier that ensures faster backups because the app now leverages the macOS FSEvents.

The speed increase of the new file-copying system is quite dramatic and version 6 comes with a task preview that allows you to speed up the process even more by removing files you don't need to preserve. A new scheduling option allows you to run a backup task when files are modified on the source. Other improvements revolve around data security and ensuring your backup is identical to the source. The first of this category of features is the visual comparison of source and destination, while a more deep-level new feature is the backup audit in the Task History.

Advanced file verification at the end of a backup task lets you verify files on the source and destination independently, against a hash that was recorded when the file was last copied.

It's this set of integrity checks and verifications that allow you to use CCC 6 as a basic image or video footage offloader as well.

But we're not done yet. A Snapshot Navigator offers an easy way to explore older versions of files, while you can now also temporarily pause a backup task. CCC 6 also gives you a lot more information about your source and destination volumes, such as extensive information about the selected volume. The interface itself is more streamlined, as well, and restoring from a CCC 6 backup is more powerful than it was with earlier versions. ■



Company: Bombich Software, Inc.

Price: \$39.99

Hot: The number and implementation of checks and verifications; speed; can fully replace Time Machine; can be made to respect Time Machine exceptions

Not:



Aputure Fresnel 2X

► *More Light and Sharper Shadows from Your Lamp* | Review by Erik Vlietinck

Aputure's Bowens Mount Fresnel 2x is a Fresnel lens for intensifying the light coming from an Aputure LS 120d and LS C300d. It also works with Aputure's budget Amaran lamps. My testing was with the Amaran 100d and 100x.

When pointing the lamp at a white wall from a distance of 1.5m, my light meter measured an increase of light from 8,000 lx at the Fresnel's largest angle of 60° to 14,000 lx at its smallest angle of 12°. The Fresnel 2x is that powerful because its design features dual optical elements with a large 6" front Fresnel lens. The rear lens, which is also made of solid glass, focuses and magnifies the beam onto the Fresnel.

The outer parts are made of strong plastics, while the internal components are metal. The whole feels solid and durable. The rotating barrel is easy and efficient to use and so smooth that I think the lens will last for a long time despite it being heavy and quite large.

The focus throw is accurate and even the narrowest angle has a nice feathering effect. If you want to concentrate the beam even more, you can buy the Aputure Barn Doors. I found no light leakage from the cooling vents. The Fresnel 2x's color accuracy is great with a deviation of less than 200 Kelvin across the angle range.

With the 100x, the Fresnel 2x creates faint banding when you set the lamp anywhere between its 2700K lowest and its 6500K upper temperature limit. Banding disappears when the 100x is at either end of its extreme color temperature settings.

If you want to create chiaroscuro portraits, I think you might want to add the barn doors if you position the light further away from the subject than the 1.5 meters with which I tested. ■

5.0

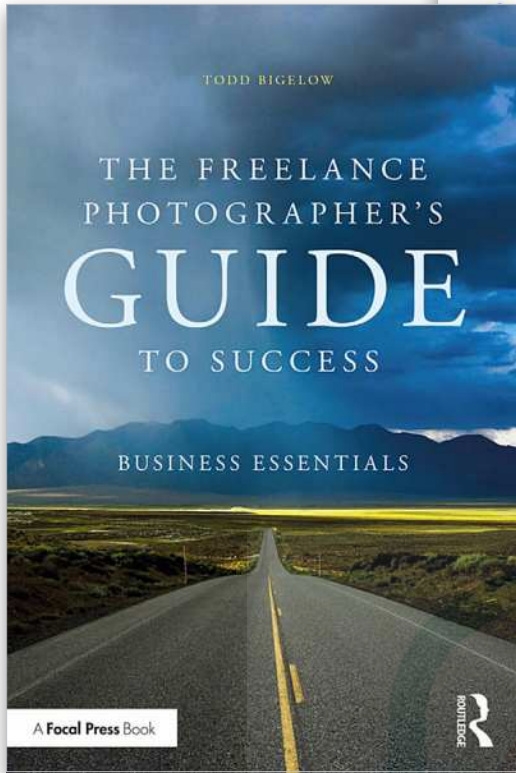


Company: Aputure Imaging Industries Co. Ltd.

Price: \$119

Hot: Intensifying output for a low price; color accuracy; no leakage; strong and sturdy

Not:



CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

your website functions merely as a place to showcase portfolio, you're ignoring functionality that will help business grow.

The answer to the question is nearly always the same. When I present my students in the classroom, rarely does a hand get raised. When I return from a room full of photographers during photo conferences or events, 100% of those in attendance raise their hands. It's the question, you ask? Many of you have a portfolio that also functions as an archive? The reason I ask is to gauge photographers' understanding of the difference between a website serving solely as a portfolio showcase as opposed to one that serves as a portfolio showcase and a repository for work that facilitates client development and engagement. There is a difference between the two and I've listed them in Table 4.1.

Website Only	Website and Archive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays Your Best Work • Displays Your Bio and Contact Info 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays Your Best Work • Displays Your Bio and Contact Info • Seamless Image Distribution to Clients • View Only or Downloadable Galleries • Creates Direct Licensing Opportunities • Generates much Stronger SEO • Cloud Storage

Clearly, there is a distinct advantage to utilizing a website that functions as a portfolio showcase while also serving as an archive. If you're still not sure what an archive is, just consider it all of the images you've shot throughout your life to which you own the rights. If you're a freelancer and have not literally signed away the rights to your work in any manner, then you own the image rights and can store, license, distribute and otherwise use the images in manners you see fit (I will break down when releases are required and other restrictions later in the guide). Let's look a little further at the advantages to an archive and how it works.

When visitors to your website land on your site they should, of course, encounter an image or images that represent your talent and vision. In other words, these are your "portfolio" images and reflect your best work. For sake of simplicity, let's say your website has a revolving set of a dozen images representing your portfolio. That's fairly normal. Then perhaps you have another four or five galleries devoted to Personal Projects, Portraits, Landscapes and Lifestyle with each gallery consisting of another dozen photos each for a grand total of 50-100 images. That means there are only 100 images at most to drive SEO (Search Engine Optimization), which is a key component in being discovered. Let's put it this way; each image has SEO potential so the more images on your site the better the potential search engine ranking, and the more likely it is that you will appear when someone searches for a photographer or images.

About now is when hands shoot sky high and students ask me, "Wait, you mean you want me to have 10,000 images in my portfolio?" No, that's not at all what I mean. What I mean is that an archive will serve as a partition of sorts and allow for a portfolio to be "out front" on the landing page while also allowing the tens of thousands of additional images to be placed "in back" where they are searchable and viewable by search engines! By setting up your website in this manner you get the best of both worlds. You get a portfolio out front with whatever galleries you choose to make available but also the enormous benefits of the much stronger SEO derived from 10,000 searchable images instead of 100 images. Here's another way to think of it that will make what I'm advocating even easier

The Freelance Photographer's Guide to Success: Business Essentials

► *Todd Bigelow* | Review by *Peter Bauer*

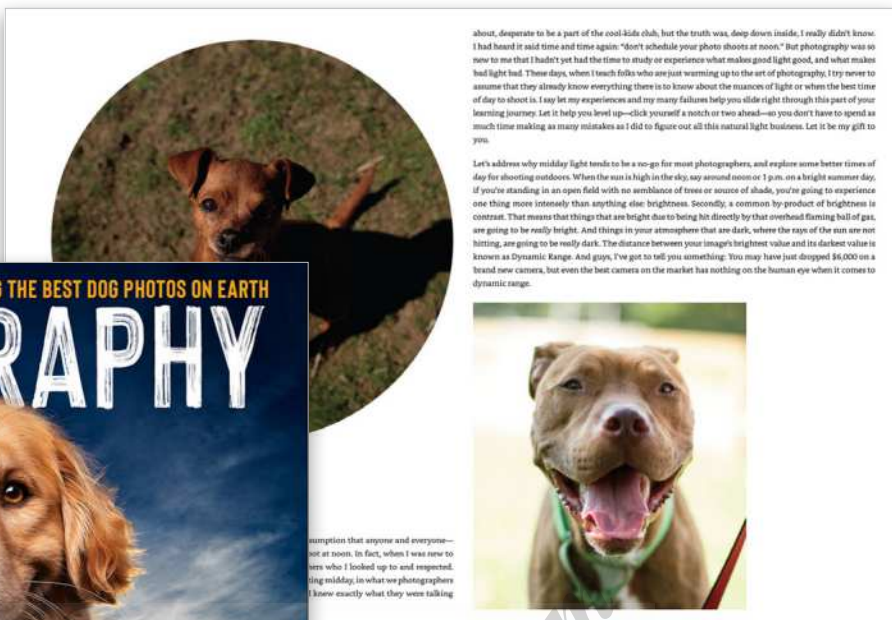
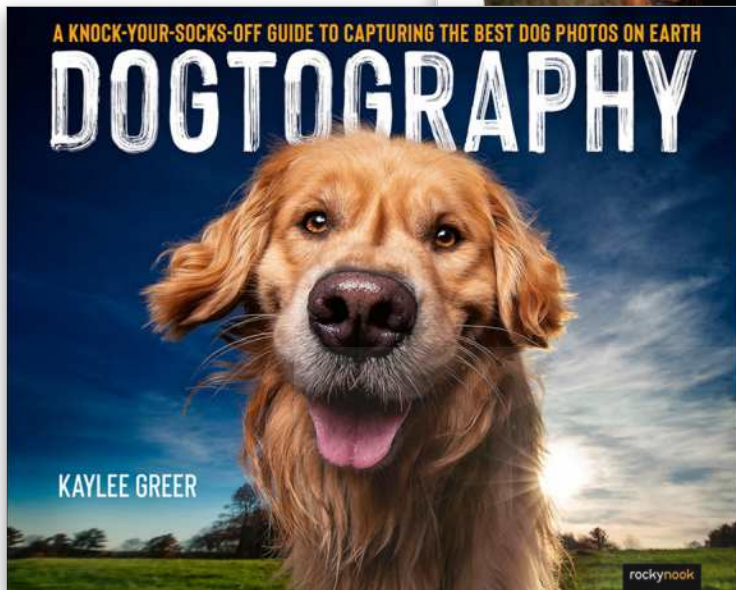
One of the first questions I ask when preparing to review a book is, "Who should read this?" Virtually every book has a target audience, but even if that's a small group, the content may be relevant to a much larger audience. (If it's a book for a very specific, very small group, for example, the owners of one particular camera model, you probably won't see a review in these pages.) The title of this book tells you for whom it was written. But even if you're not a freelancer trying to make your business more efficient, there may be a lot here for you. The author starts Chapter 2, "Freelancing 101," with "Developing multiple revenue streams is key to survival...." Whether you're a studio photographer, staff photographer, or an advanced hobbyist, this book can help you generate additional revenue and do it more efficiently. ■

4.5 ★★★★★

Publisher: Routledge

Pages: 250

Price: \$39.95 (paperback); \$31.16 (Kindle); \$160 (hardcover)



Dogtography: A Knock-Your-Socks-Off Guide to Capturing the Best Dog Photos on Earth

► *Kaylee Greer* | Review by Peter Bauer

Maybe you've met the author, taken a class with her, perhaps attended one of her seminars or workshops, or seen her on the National Geographic TV series, *Pupparazzi*. If so, you know that Kaylee is a bubbly, energetic, slightly irreverent, and extremely articulate person. That personality comes out on the pages of this book. You also know that she truly understands her subject matter and presents all the little details that make her work so wonderful. It's all here. But since this is a book rather than a workshop, seminar, or conference session, you can absorb the material at your own pace and refer back to various sections time and again. While she specializes in dog photography, this book is relevant to all pet and people portraiture, as well as on-site product photography. You don't need to be a dog photographer to learn a lot from this book. ■



Publisher: Rocky Nook, Inc.

Pages: 336

Price: \$45 (paperback);
\$25.99 (Kindle)

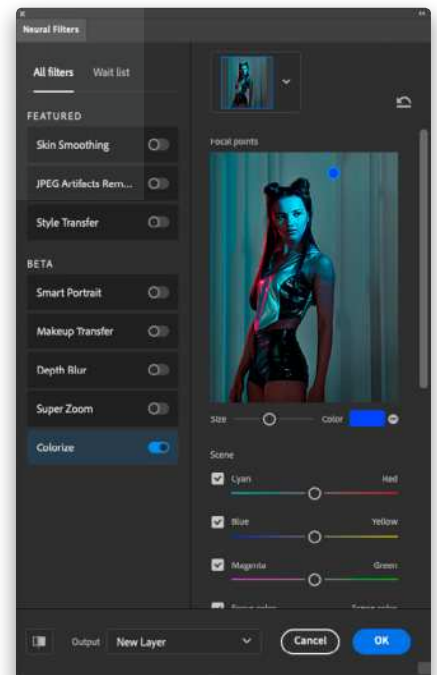
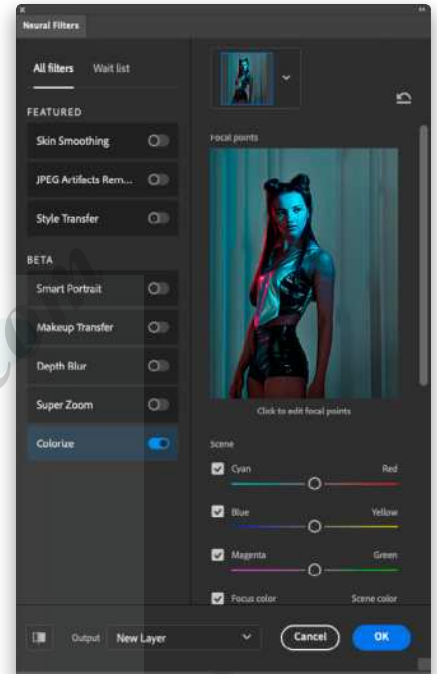


This month, I have some really useful tips that I call Mickey-Mouse-Club-secret-handshake and knowing-nod little tricks. They're quick and simple but they'll save you so much frustration. I hope you enjoy them as much as I've enjoyed sharing them with you.

TELLING COLORIZE WHAT COLORS YOU WANT

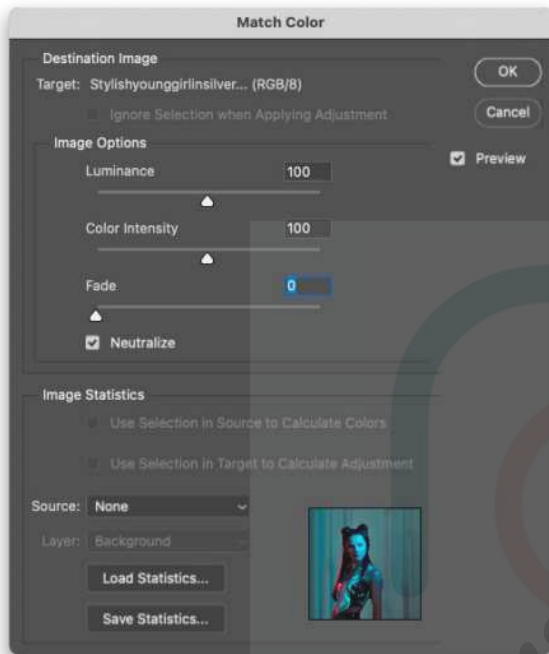
In the latest Photoshop update, there are some very nice additions to the Neural Filters. These filters use Adobe Sensei (AI) to change your images. One that's getting a lot of attention is Colorize, which is able to colorize a black-and-white image or recolor an existing color image. I've heard from a lot of people asking about choosing the colors to add.

To access Colorize, go to Filter>Neural Filters and then choose Colorize in the BETA list in the Neural Filters panel. You'll most likely have to download the filter first. In the image thumbnail in the panel, click where you want to control the color, and a Color Picker will appear. Choose a color and click OK to apply it to the image "automagically." If you click again, it will add another point that's the same color as the previous point. Just click the Color swatch to change the color of the new point. It's pretty cool; you should try it.



NEUTRALIZE COLOR CASTS

Speaking of color, here's a great tip to instantly remove color casts, or tame wild and unruly colors. Choose Image>Adjustments>Match Color. See the Neutralize color box? Click it, and the image will analyze itself against itself (I know, meta). Most of the time, color casts will be removed and overall color will be more harmonized.



COLOR CHANNELS IN CURVES

Since we're on a roll with color, let's do one more: Did you know you can easily get expensive-looking color grades on your images by individually changing the color channels? This sounds much more complex than it really is. Simply click on the Create New Adjustment Layer icon (half-black, half-white circle) at the bottom of the Layers panel and choose Curves. In the Properties panel (Window>Properties), where it says RGB, click to reveal the individual channels. Choose either Red, Green, or Blue, and then make some adjustments on the curve to influence that color in the shadows and highlights. This can get some really nice results.

TRIM THE LOOSE ENDS

Have you ever been working with an image that has transparency and you wanted to crop away the transparency,

but you didn't want to cut into the image. If you're going to the web, you want to crop it down to the exact pixel. You could zoom in tight and use the Crop tool like a surgeon, or you could just use this tip: Choose Image>Trim, click on Transparent Pixels, make sure all the Trim Away boxes are checked, and press Enter. It will crop it down for you nice and tight without losing anything.

REVEAL ALL

Since you just learned how to trim everything nice and tight, how about the opposite? Just because you can't see it, doesn't mean it's not there. How often do you combine images and then have to extend your canvas so you can see the parts that extend beyond it? If you're compositing images, you'll face this challenge all the time. Simply choose Image>Reveal All, and it will expand the image to show everything that falls outside the canvas, including all hidden layers.

WHERE ARE MY HANDLES?

One of my favorite tools is Free Transform. All you need to do is press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) and a bounding box with eight handles will appear around your layer. Drag the handles to scale that layer, or click-and-drag outside the bounding box to rotate it. If you Right-click in the image, you'll see even more options, such as Warp and Skew. But what if you can't see the handles?

When your layer is larger than your visible document area and you can't see the bounding box and its handles, there are two fixes. The first solution, when you don't want to scale the layer, is to press Command-0 (PC: Ctrl-0). Your image will zoom out so you can see all the handles. The second solution, for when you'll be scaling the layer, is to use the W and H fields in the Options Bar when Free Transform is active. Make sure the chain link is turned on between the two fields, move your cursor over either the W or H, and click-and-drag to the left. Your layer will now scale down until it's the size you want, or until you can at least see the handles and use them instead.

PUT SAVE AS BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS

If you updated Photoshop and tried to use File>Save As with a layered file, you probably noticed that most of the options are missing in the Format drop-down menu, such as JPEG. There's now a button to the right of the Format drop-down menu that lets you Save a Copy. This will bring back all the Format options, but it will add the word "copy" to the end of the filename. Alternatively, you could initially choose File>Save a Copy instead of File>Save As.

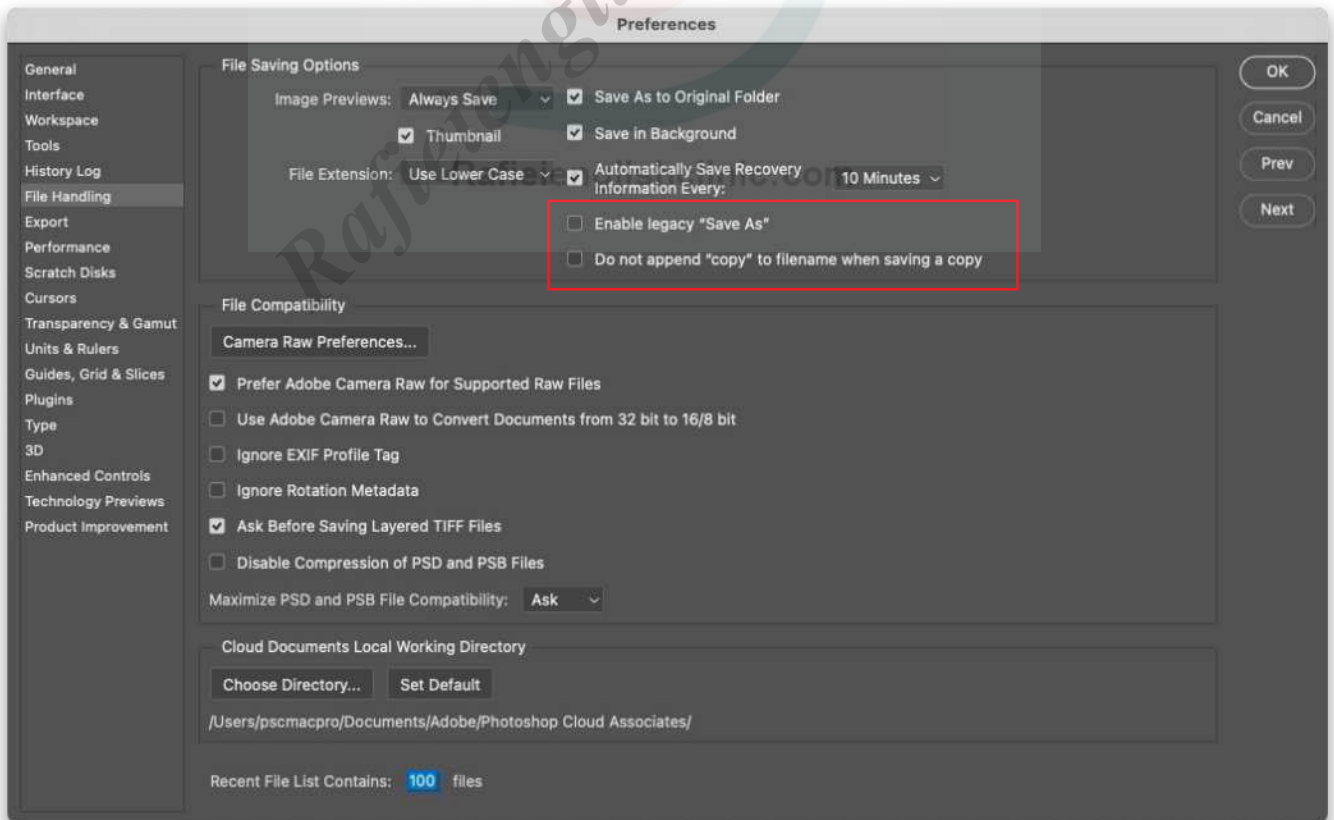
There are two questions you may ask: Why did they change this, and how can I put it back to the way it was? As to the why, there has been a bug on macOS for a while where you could save a JPEG with a PSD extension, or a PSD with a JPEG extension. Maybe you came across it? This made you accidentally overwrite your layered file with a flattened JPEG, for example.

To answer your second question, if you don't like this new behavior, choose Photoshop (PC: Edit)>Preferences>File Handling. Choose Enable Legacy "Save As," and it will go back to the old way. If you like the new way, but get bugged by deleting the word "copy" all the time, there's another checkbox in the File Handling Preferences that you can use. Check Do Not Append "Copy" to Filename when Saving a Copy.

ADD LAYER MASK WITHOUT SELECTION CUTTING OUT YOUR LAYER

I wish I had a dollar for every time this has happened. You know the drill, you're going to do some masking on a layer and decide to make a selection first to help you. You grab that selection tool and make a perfect selection (maybe you spent more time on it than you intended, but it's the perfect selection). Now, you need to add your layer mask. Oops. As soon as you hit that Add Layer Mask icon (circle in a square) at the bottom of the Layers panel, it adds a mask alright, but it will cut out your layer using your selection and then turn off the selection. You know it before you hit that Add Layer Mask icon but you do it anyway.

You can Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) on the mask thumbnail in the Layers panel to reload the selection, but if you delete the mask, you're stuck with the same problem. You could also try inverting the selection after you reload it, and fill the mask with white and hope for no hairline; however, you can avoid this problem altogether. After you make your selection, instead of clicking that Add Layer Mask icon, choose Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All, which will add a layer mask without turning off the selection or masking anything out. "I wish I had stumbled across this one years ago," you may say. Well, now you know. ■



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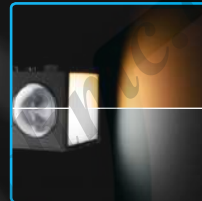
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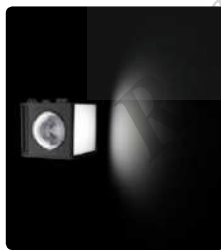


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