

Actions
 Menu: Window > Actions
 Shortcut: Alt/Opt F9
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2
 See also: Batch command, Droplet

Accented Edges filter
 Menu: Filters > Brush Strokes > Accented Edges
 Shortcut: Ctrl F
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2
 See also: Ink Outlines filter

The Accented Edges filter searches out the edges within a picture and then highlights them with a line. The size of the line is controlled by the Edge Width slider (1) in the filter's dialog. The darkness or lightness of the line is determined by the Edge Brightness slider (2). A high value produces a lightly colored edge that appears like chalk and a low value, like the one used in the illustration here, creates an ink-like outline. The Smoothness slider (3) is used to even out the roughness of jagged edges of the line.



An action is a way of automatically applying a technique to an image using a pre-recorded series of commands. Actions are triggered either by pressing one or a combination of keys or selecting the action from the Actions palette (1). Many actions are already supplied with Photoshop and can be found at the bottom of the Actions menu (2) by clicking on the side-arrow at the top right of the Actions palette.

An action can be as simple as opening a new canvas or as advanced as creating a drop shadow on an existing picture or as in our example making snow.

Ready-made actions can be downloaded from the internet, saved to your hard drive and then installed in Photoshop. Use the Load Actions command (3) in the Actions menu to search for and install the downloaded ATN or Photoshop Actions file.

You can also create your own Photoshop actions using the Record mode, so if there are techniques you find particularly fiddly or ones you'll want to use again, record the commands as you run through them and assign the action a shortcut key.

 1. Actions can also be applied to several images in one go using the Batch command or created into droplets.

2. If a command cannot be recorded you can insert it manually using the Insert Menu command.

3. If you make a mistake, keep going, you can edit the script later.

4. Some settings may need modifying for different images. Clicking on the box to the left of the action will stop the script at that point and bring up the dialog box so you can manually adjust before continuing the script.





Active layer

Menu: —
 Shortcut: — See also: —
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

The Layers feature is great for creating pictures that are made up of a variety of parts. But the way in which the feature works means that it is only possible to edit or enhance one layer at a time. You must activate the layer first before applying changes.

To select the layer, click on its thumbnail in the Layers palette. At this point the layer will change to a different color from the rest in the stack. The layer is now active and can be edited in isolation from the others that make up the picture.

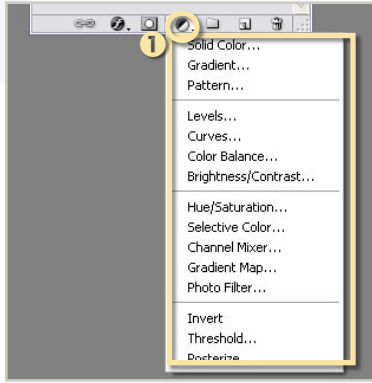


Add Noise filter

Menu: Filter > Noise > Add Noise
 Shortcut: Ctrl F See also: Grain filter,
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2 Texturizer filter

Many photographers like to replicate the look of film grain in their digital photographs. Using the Add Noise filter is one way to introduce this texture into your digital pictures. The filter adds random speckled pixels to your picture. A small amount of noise can be applied to gradients to prevent banding when printed.

The filter uses a single Amount slider to control the strength of the texture effect. The higher the setting the more obvious the results will be. Two different types of texture are provided – Uniform and Gaussian. The Uniform option adds the noise evenly across all the tones in the picture. In contrast the Gaussian setting concentrates the noise in the midtones with fewer changes being applied to the highlight and shadow areas. Selecting the Monochrome option restricts the noisy pixels added to white, black and gray only.



Adjustment layers

Menu: Layer > New Adjustment Layer
 Shortcut: Layers palette button See also: Grain filter,
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2 Fill Layers

These special layers alter the look of the layers that are arranged below them in the stack. They act as a filter through which the lower layers are viewed. You can use adjustment layers to perform many of the enhancement tasks that you would normally apply directly to an image layer without changing the image itself.

CS2 contains twelve different adjustment layers which are grouped with the Fill layers under the Create Adjustment Layer button (1) in the Layers palette. They are:

- Levels** – Adjusts the tones in the picture.
- Curves** – Adjust the tones in the picture.
- Color Balance** – Used for adding or removing color casts from images.
- Brightness/Contrast** – Lightens, darkens and controls contrast.
- Hue/Saturation** – Changes the color and strength of color in photos.

Selective Color – Adjusts the hue of a single group of colors.

Channel Mixer – Changes the color makeup of individual channels and in the monochrome mode creates great black and white conversions from color pictures.

Gradient Map – Changes the photo so that all the tones are mapped to the values of a selected gradient.

Invert – Reverses all the tones in a picture, producing a negative effect.

Threshold – Converts the picture to pure black and white with no grays present at all.

Photo Filter – Reproduces the color changes of traditional photo filters.

Posterize – Reduces the total number of colors in a picture and creates a flat paint (or poster)-like effect.

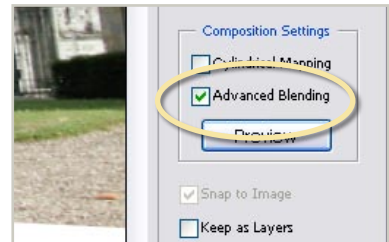


Adobe Online

Menu: Help > Photoshop Online
 Shortcut: — See also: —
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

Users can be transported directly to Adobe's official Photoshop (and ImageReady) website by clicking on the picture icon (feather for CS and CS2) at the top of the toolbar (1). This action displays your default web browser and automatically loads the Photoshop home page.

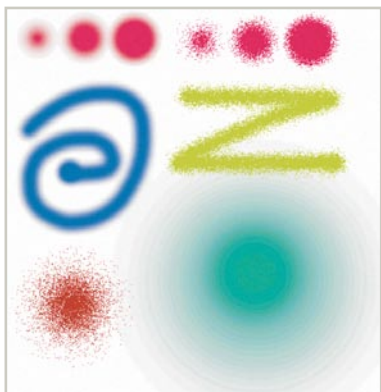
The same web page is displayed if you select Help > Photoshop Online (2).



Advanced Blending

Menu: File > Automate > Photomerge
 Shortcut: — See also: Photomerge
 Version: CS, CS2

The Advanced Blending option in the Photomerge workspace provides an automatic approach to balancing the color and tone of sequential pictures in a composition. The feature is designed to even out slight exposure or color differences that can occur when creating source images. When used in conjunction with the Preview button the results can be reviewed on screen before proceeding to the creation of the full panorama. On some occasions it is difficult to assess the accuracy of the blending action via the preview. If this occurs then create several different panoramas applying different Blending, Perspective and Mapping settings for each.



Airbrush

Menu: —
 Shortcut: B then Airbrush button from the options bar See also: Brush tool
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

A painting tool that applies a color in much the same way as a real airbrush. The airbrush moved from the toolbar in Photoshop 7.0 and now appears in the brush options bar. Now you simply choose airbrush as a style and select how you want it to work from the Brush palette.

Hold down the mouse and drag it around to spray color evenly onto the canvas. Hold it in the same place and color builds up while spreading outwards. Covering an area that's already sprayed increases color depth.

As with all brush modes you can specify size, blending mode and opacity from the bar that appears at the top of the page when you click on a brush. There's also an option to adjust flow.



1. Select a start point, hold down the Shift key and then click an end point to paint a straight line.

2. Use the airbrush on low pressure with black paint to create shadows.

3. Press the Caps lock key to turn the airbrush standard cursor into a precision cross hair.

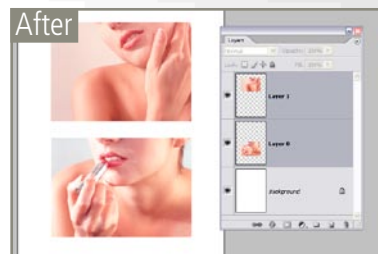
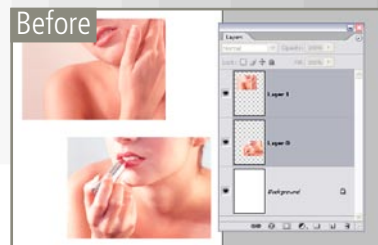


Aliasing

Menu: —
 Shortcut: — See also: Anti-aliasing fonts, Anti-aliasing selections
 Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

Even though the lettering system in Photoshop is based on smooth-edged (vector) technology, when type layers are flattened into the background, or the PSD file is saved in the JPEG format, the type is converted to pixels. One of the drawbacks of using a pixel system is that curves and diagonal lines are recreated with a series of pixel steps. When viewed closely, or printed very large, these steps can become obvious and appear as a saw-tooth pattern. This is called 'aliasing'.

Anti-aliasing is a system where the effects of these 'jaggies' are made less noticeable by partially filling in the edge pixels. This technique produces smoother looking type overall and should be used in all print circumstances and web applications.



Align Linked

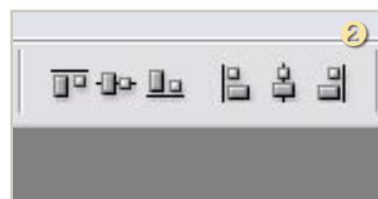
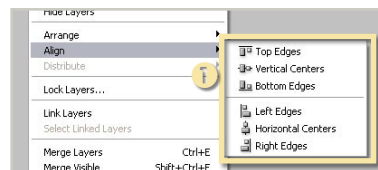
Menu: Layer > Align
 Shortcut: — See also: Arrange
 Version: CS, CS2

The Aligned Linked feature was introduced in Photoshop CS to make it easier to align items within layers.

Select this option and one of the six align options to make objects on linked layers align to the top, center or bottom edge in either horizontal or vertical directions.

In CS2 the Align option also functions with multi-selected layers that are not linked.

The Align options are located in the Layer menu (1) and are also present on the options bar (2) when multi-layers are selected.





Aligning type

Menu: —
Shortcut: — See also: Channels
Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

The terms alignment and justification are often used interchangeably and refer to the way that a line or paragraph of text is positioned on the image.

The left align feature will arrange all text to the left of the text frame. When applied to a group of sentences the left edge of the paragraph is organized into a straight vertical line whilst the right-hand edge remains uneven or ragged.

The right align works in the opposite fashion, straightening the right-hand edge of the paragraph and leaving the left ragged.

Selecting the center text option will align the paragraph around a central line and leave both left and right edges ragged.

Select the type alignment before entering the text into your document. Do this by pressing the appropriate alignment button in the Type tool options bar.

To change the alignment of existing text use the cursor to highlight the letters and then press the chosen alignment button.



All command

Menu: Select > Select All
Shortcut: Ctrl/Cmd A See also: Selections
Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

The All command, found under the Select menu, encompasses the whole picture with a selection marquee. This command is



Alpha channel

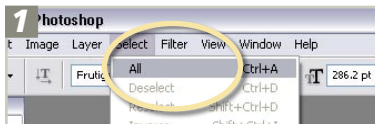
Menu: —
Shortcut: — See also: Channels
Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

These are ideal for saving selections separate from the RGB or CMYK channels. Carefully draw round a subject and choose Select > Save Selection once you're happy with the selection. The selection is stored at the base of the Channels palette as a separate channel – the Alpha channel. It can be recalled and the selection applied to the image at any time by calling up Load Selection from the Select menu. This saves you having to reselect a subject later.

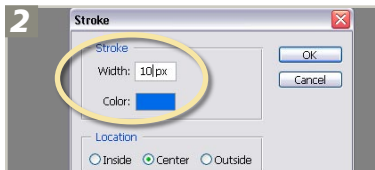
Over 50 Alpha channels can be added to an RGB image allowing you to produce very complex selections that can be recalled to make changes to a variety of detailed parts of the image at any time.

Alpha channels can also be used to create depth maps which can be loaded into Lens Blur.

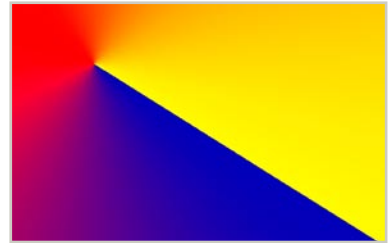
the first step in a simple border creation technique that also uses the Stroke feature. See below.



Open a suitable photo into the Editor workspace. Use the Select > All command to place a marquee around the whole canvas.



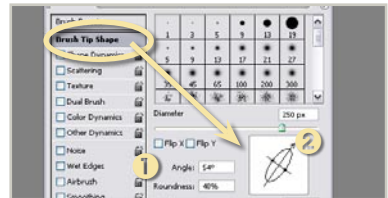
With the selection still active choose Edit > Stroke. In the Stroke dialog that appears, pick the width of the stroke (line) and its color. Next select the Inside option as the location. Click OK to draw the colored border.



Angle gradient tool

Menu: —
Shortcut: G (Gradient tool) See also: Gradients
Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

Photoshop has no less than five gradient types for you to play with. All the gradient options gradually change color and tone from one point in the picture to another. The Angle gradient (1) gradually changes the color in a counterclockwise direction around the starting point.



Angle option – Brush

Menu: —
Shortcut: B (Brush tool) See also: Brush Presets
Version: 6.0, 7.0, CS, CS2

One of the strengths of Photoshop as a drawing package is the flexibility of its brush engine. Rather than just supplying a series of pre-made brushes Adobe includes the ability to create and save custom brushes.

The Brushes palette, which is opened with the Brushes palette button on the Brush options bar, contains controls for changing dozens of different brush characteristics. The brush angle is one of these custom characteristics.

Changing the angle will rotate the brush tip resulting in a diagonal stroke when dragged across canvas. To make the brush tip slant, select the Brush Tip Shape option from the list on the left, alter the angle value (1). The change in brush shape is previewed on the bottom right of the dialog (2).