

Creating Photoshop Actions to automate Photoshop tasks

Do you have something you do all the time in Photoshop. Something really easy, like fixing dark photos using the “Duplicate layer/Change blending mode to screen” method. Doing anything over and over can not only be really boring but it can be a huge waste of time.

Why not let Photoshop do all the repetitive work for you?

Let’s say you want to automate making dark photos lighter by using the “Duplicate layer/Change blending mode to screen” method. To automate this task, do this:

1. Open the photo you want to use.
2. Make sure the Actions palette is open.
3. From the drop out menu on the Actions palette choose New Set. A dialog box will open asking you to name the set. Name your set Yearbook Actions. From now on, when you create a new action, put it in this set. (Figure A)
4. From the same drop out menu on the Actions palette, choose, New Action. When the dialog box opens, name it Fix Dark Photos (in this case) or whatever you want that action to do. Just name it so can you remember what it is in the future.
5. When you have typed in the name, click Record. (Figure B) Then do exactly what you want the action to do. In this case (fixing a dark photo) we duplicated the layer, changed the blending mode to screen, flattened the layers, saved the file and closed it.
6. Then from the drop out menu on the Actions palette choose Stop Recording. (Note: You may notice that there are DVD/tape recorder type buttons at the bottom of the Actions palette. You can use those to control record and stop as well as playing the action.)
7. Now whenever you have a dark photo, just open the photo, open the Actions palette and click the Fix Dark Photos action and click the Play button at the bottom of the palette. It will automatically fix your picture using this method.
8. To do this to an entire folder of dark photos, just choose File>Automate>Batch. (Figure C)
9. The dialog box that opens has some selections for you to make. (Figure D) First choose your set, then your action. Then choose the folder you want converted. Make sure that all the pictures in the folder need the same action run on them. At this point you can also choose to have them just save and close in the original folder or to save and close to another folder instead. This method leaves your originals untouched. Then hit OK and Photoshop will perform that action on the entire folder. (Note: If you have other folders inside of that folder, choose “Include All Subfolders” before you click OK.)

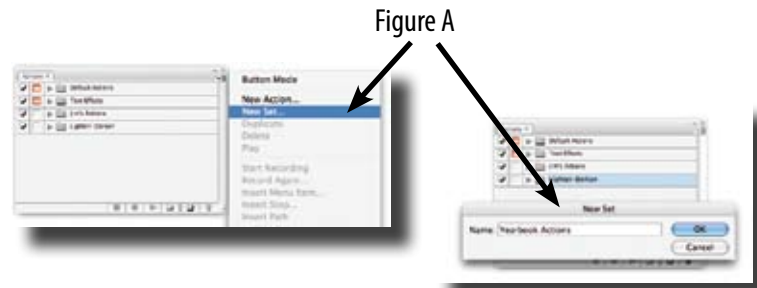


Figure B



Figure C

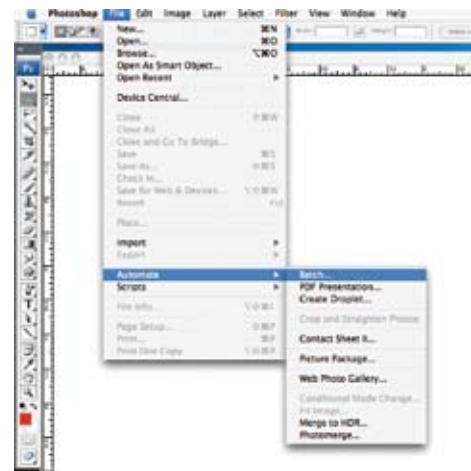


Figure D

