

Photoshop Actions Tutorial by April

Actions were a new feature in Adobe Photoshop 4.0, and they are back in the 5.0 and 5.5 versions. They are batch files or macros for Photoshop. They allow you to perform a series of filters/adjustments/transformations at the click of a button. If you do something over and over (like making drop shadows or beveled text) then you can make an action for it. You can also make substitutes for some of the cool commercial filters on the market.

With this in mind I am only going to do a simple tutorial on drop shadows with text.

I am also going to show you how batch processing works.

I am a beginner at Actions so I don't have any really detailed actions that I've made myself.

First thing first using an action.

I'm guessing that anyone with Photoshop 4.0 and above will be able to follow this.

1. Photoshop come pre loaded with a few Default actions.

To find your actions palette go to Window on your toolbar and go down to Show Actions. On my palette it's lumped in with my history, channels and layers palette..I just choose the tab that says Actions and wala.

2. The next thing would be to look in the default actions folder in the palette and see what kind of actions are there.

I'm just going to have us run one so that you can see how to.

3. At the bottom of your actions palette, you have some buttons. The first is the stop button, next is the record, play and so on..you can drag your cursor over them to see what they are. So to play an action you would click on the one that you wanted and it would highlight then go down to the buttons at the bottom and click the play button. it will go through all the tasks of creating the effect, and you will get the end result.

Hope that was easy enough for you. If not let me know.

The next step is a little different...we are going to record a quick action. I hope you take time after this to experiment ..and make longer more complex actions.

4. First step. Open a picture that you want to do some things to. Then on the actions palette at the bottom buttons there is one that looks like page and has the corner folded up on it(new action button), press this it will bring up a window for you to name your new action and give you a chose of where you want to file it in your action pallet, then hit record...from this point on it's recording your actions. You can add a layer and put text on that layer and adjust it where you want or other things. I'm not really going to go through actually recording an action because I think you can get the idea and I want you all to be creative and show me what you can do. Also what came to mind is doing other tutorials and trying to record them as actions and see what you come up with.

So when your done manipulating your image, hit the stop button that is on the bottom of the actions palette and you are done.

5. Open a new picture and go up and highlight your action and hit play and test it out on another picture or use the same plain picture to see your work in motion.

Now on to something called batch processing.

6. Basically you use this to run the same action on a group of photos. Say you want to make every picture into a sepia photo, all you would have to do is group your photos into a folder and then go through the steps I'm about to give you and your action will effect all the images in that folder saves time. Another thing I just thought about is if you sign your name to all your work and want to get it done faster you would create an action of signing your name and then group them all in one folder and apply it to the folder and wala.

Here are the steps to do batch processing:

1. Group all the images that you want to effect into the same folder.

2. Go to File on the toolbar menu and go down to automate then over to batch, a window will come up then you get to choose which action you want to apply then at source you keep it a folder and under that there is a button that says choose, click on that. You will choose the folder that you have all your images in. You then have a choice at the destination portion on if you want to have it dump your results into another folder, nothing, or save and close..I chose none. Then you have an area about errors I just left it alone at "Stop for errors". Click ok and wala it does your images.

Happy creating!

April