

A Photoshop Potpourri

Topic:

Finding cropping handles. Ever lose those? What a pain.

Method:

Step 1: Press Control (Command-Mac) O. See how easy that was. There they are ready for you to grab and drag.

Topic:

Making all your layer styles the same.

Method:

Step 1: When you want to have more than one layer with the same style, just grab the little *f* in the layer you already like and drag it on top of another layer that you want to have the same style.

Topic:

Zoom in and out with ease

Method:

Step 1: Do you have a scroll wheel on your mouse. Then choose In-Design>Preferences and click Zoom with Scroll Wheel.

Topic:

I try to work but nothin' happens. If you have ever clicked on a tool and done something to a photo and nothing has happened it will drive you nuts. Here's two things to check.

Method:

Step 1: Quickly press Control (Command-Mac) D. There is a good possibility that you have something selected someplace in the file and are trying to do something somewhere else. You need to Deselect and this will do that.

Step 2: If that doesn't work, check the tool's options at the top of the page. If the Opacity or flow (or just about anything else have been changed previously, you may need to readjust them.

Topic:

Grab a color outside Photoshop. You see a color (in a web page, in InDesign, on YTO) that you just have to match a headline to in Photoshop. It's easy to grab it.

Method:

Step 1: Open the color picker by clicking on your foreground color.

Step 2: When you drag the eyedropper over your picture your color changes to what you are dragging over. To grab something outside of Photoshop, just press the mouse button when you have that eyedropper showing and drag it anywhere on your screen.

Topic:

My brush size won't change. You are trying to change the size of your brush tool (or any other tool that uses a brush) and all you can get is a crosshair cursor. This will drive you nuts and I get at least one call about it every month.

Method:

Step 1: Your Caps Lock key is down. Just press it and you will have control of your brush size again.

Topic: Using Actions

To learn how to create actions of your own, see the next page.

Using Actions

If you learn nothing else automation-wise, learn these. And learn to make your own and USE THEM!

Reason we do it:

To save time. Some of my advisers have even sent me letters of thanks for showing them how to do this.

Whenever you have to do something repetitive in Photoshop or you have to do something every day, over and over, create an action to do it. For instance, every photo I put in one publication I do has to be CMYK and 300 DPI. Since my camera shoots at 240 and many of the pictures I download are at 72, 150 or 240 and RGB, I have an action that makes the 300 DPI and CMYK. It is the last thing I do with each picture.

Method:

- Step 1: Do exactly what you want to have happen, step-by-step with no interruptions. Make sure you have it down right.
- Step 2: Open the Actions panel.
- Step 3: From the Actions panel drop out menu, choose New Set. (*Figure A*) Name the new set something you will remember and save it. I call mine My Actions
- Step 4: From the Action panel drop our menu, choose New Action (*Figure B*). Name the Action (the one I mentioned above is CMYK 300) something you will remember and click Record.
- Step 5: Do the entire step-by-step process you did in step one.
- Step 6: When you are finished, from the Actions panel drop out menu, choose Stop Recording. That's it. You have now recorded an action.
- Step 7: Test the action to make sure it runs correctly. Test it on a photo you do not have-to-have or a copy of a photo.
- Step 8: If it doesn't work exactly as you want, drag your new action to the trash at the bottom of the Actions panel and rerecord it until you get it the way you want.
- Step 9: If you are worried about students running an action that they shouldn't on a particular photo, you can add a stop that will stop them and ask them if they want to do something.

Running Actions in batches

You can also do these in batches. I have a school that wants all their photos at 300 DPI and saved as PNGs. So we created an action. Then they ran it in as a batch on a whole bunch of pics in a row.

Method:

- Step 1: Create the Action you want to run. Do not include any open or save/close functions.
- Step 2: Choose File>Automate>Batch
- Step 3: In the resulting dialog box, choose your Action and photos you want to run it on as well as where you want them saved when they are done. Then click go. That Action will be performed on every photo in the folder (including subfolders if you want) you designate. Pretty darn cool. And it saves a ton of time.

Actions in Monarch

Actions are computer specific, so when you are using Monarch any action you create won't be there when you come back as you will be on a different virtual computer. So here is how to save your actions.

Method:

- Step 1: Make sure that every action you create is in your My Action set.
- Step 2: Every time you create a new action, before you log off Monarch you will need to Save the actions.
- Step 3: After you are done creating an action and before you log out, choose Save Actions (*Figure C*) from the Action panel drop out menu. Save them to your T Drive someplace where you can find them easily.
- Step 4: The next time you log on and want to use the action again, just choose Load Actions from the drop out menu on the Actions panel and find the actions you saved. You will need to save them again if you change them but if you don't, you can just use them and log out when you are done. It's as simple as that.

