



Adobe Photoshop CC update: May 2013

Welcome to the latest Adobe Photoshop CC bulletin update. This is provided free to ensure everyone can be kept up-to-date with the latest changes that have taken place in Photoshop.

This bulletin coincides with the announcement of Photoshop CC and content includes basic information about all the main features that are new to Photoshop since the CS6.1 bulletin update (which you can also download from the website). The features described here will be accessible to all Creative Cloud subscribers and those who have purchased the current version of Photoshop CC. For a complete description of how to use these new Photoshop tools, with diagrams and step-by-step tools, I recommend you buy the *Adobe Photoshop CC for Photographers* book.

New Camera Raw features

To begin with, let's focus on the latest Camera Raw features, starting with the new radial filter tool.

Radial filter adjustments

The latest version of Camera Raw now includes a radial filter to complement the 'linear' graduated filter. Essentially, the radial filter adjustment options (Figure 1) are exactly the same and you can use this new tool to apply selective adjustments to the inner or outer area of a pre-defined ellipse shape. By default, the full effect adjustment is applied using the 'Inside' option where the effect starts at the center of the ellipse, and the zero effect is at the boundary and outside the ellipse. The strength of the effect tapers off smoothly between the center and the boundary edge. You can invert the adjustment effect by clicking the 'Outside' button, or use the **X** key shortcut to quickly toggle between the two. The radial filter also has a Feather slider control, which allows you to adjust the hardness of the edge and the **Caps Lock** key allows you to visualize the extent of feathering applied to the radial filter adjustment.

To apply a radial filter adjustment you click and drag to define the initial ellipse area (you can press spacebar as you do so to reposition). Once you have done this, use the handles to adjust the ellipse shape and drag the central pin to reposition the filter and narrow or widen the ellipse shape. To center a new radial adjustment hold down the **alt** key as you click and drag. If you want to preserve the roundness of the radial ellipse shape hold down the **Shift** key as you drag.

You can use it to apply more controllable vignette adjustments to darken or lighten the corners. For example, instead of simply lightening or darkening using the Exposure slider, you can use instead, the Highlights or Shadows sliders to achieve more subtle types of adjustments. As I see it there are many creative uses for this new tool.

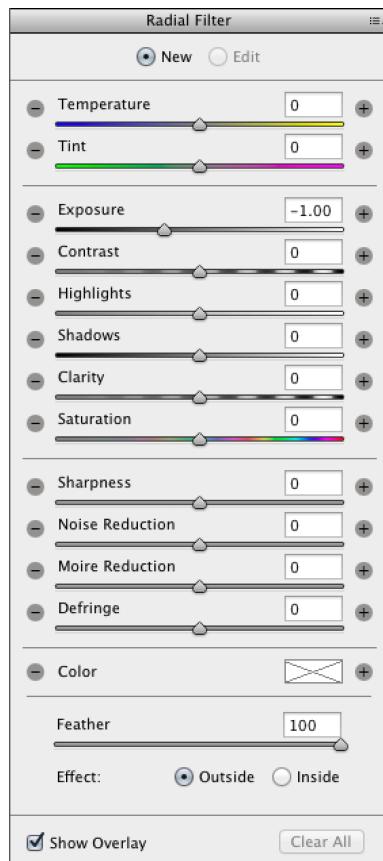


Figure 1 The radial filter options.



1 Here, I opened an image in Camera Raw and selected the radial filter tool. I **X** (Mac), or **ctrl** (PC) + double-clicked inside the preview area to add a new adjustment that filled the current frame area. I then set the Exposure slider to -0.75. By default, the adjustment was applied from the (green) centre pin outwards.



2 I used the **X** key to invert the effect, set the Exposure to a positive value of +0.40 and also applied a -0.30 Highlights adjustment. I then clicked on the side handles and adjusted these so that the effect was centered on the windmill.

Spot removal Tool: brush spots mode

The tool behavior when you click and drag has now changed. Previously, a click and drag allowed you to manually determine the position of the sample area circle. Now in Camera Raw 8, clicking and dragging allows you to precisely define the area you wish to remove. As you drag with the spot removal tool a red dotted outline will define the area you are removing and a green dotted outline define the area you are sampling from (see Figure 2). The new click and drag method auto-selects the best area to sample from and you can use the **/** key to force Camera Raw to recalculate a new sample area.

If you click and drag with the **Shift** key held down this constrains the line to a horizontal or vertical direction. But if you click and click again with the **Shift** key held down this allows you to create a 'connect the dots' selection. Also, using a regular right-mouse click you can drag left or right to reduce or increase the cursor size.

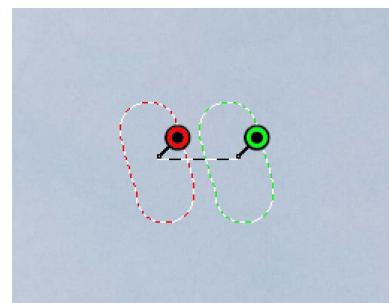


Figure 2 When you click and drag with the spot removal tool this allows you to more precisely define the area you wish to remove.

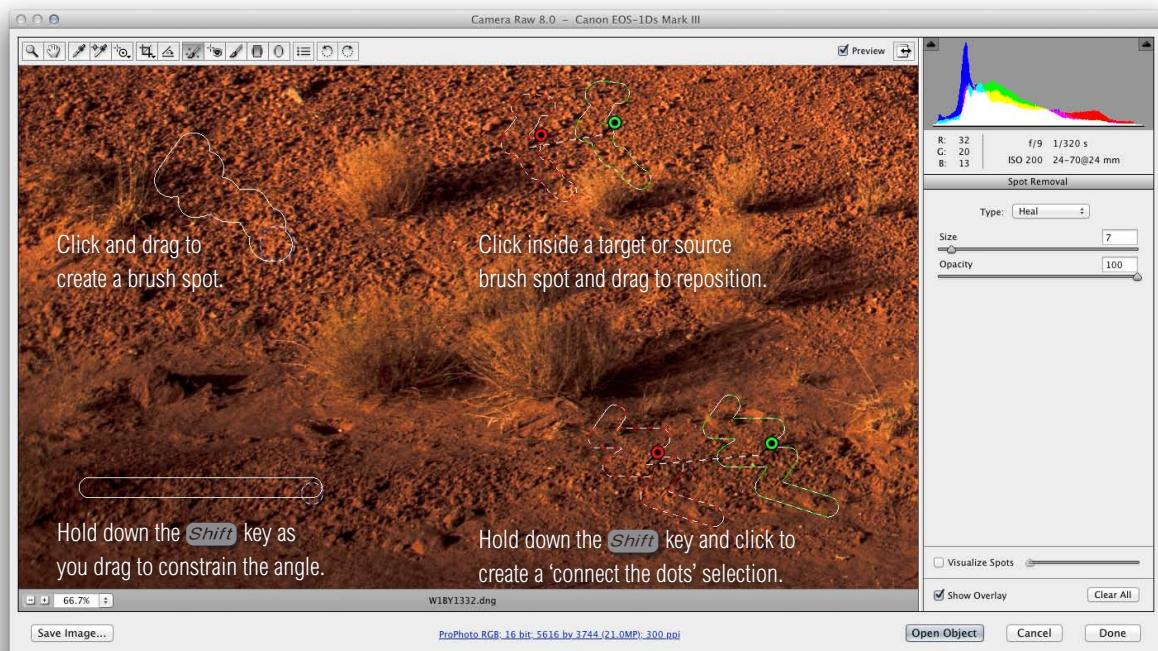


Figure 3 This screen shot shows the spot removal tool in action, with explanations of how to apply and modify brush spots.

Visualize spots

The Visualize spots feature can be used to help detect dust spots and other anomalies. This consists of a Visualize Spots checkbox and a slider (Figure 4). When enabled, you drag the slider to adjust the threshold for the preview and this can sometimes make it easier for you to highlight the spots in an image that need to be removed. You can also use the comma and period keys (or think of them as the **<** and **>** keys) to make slider value increase or decrease, and use the **Shift** key to jump more.

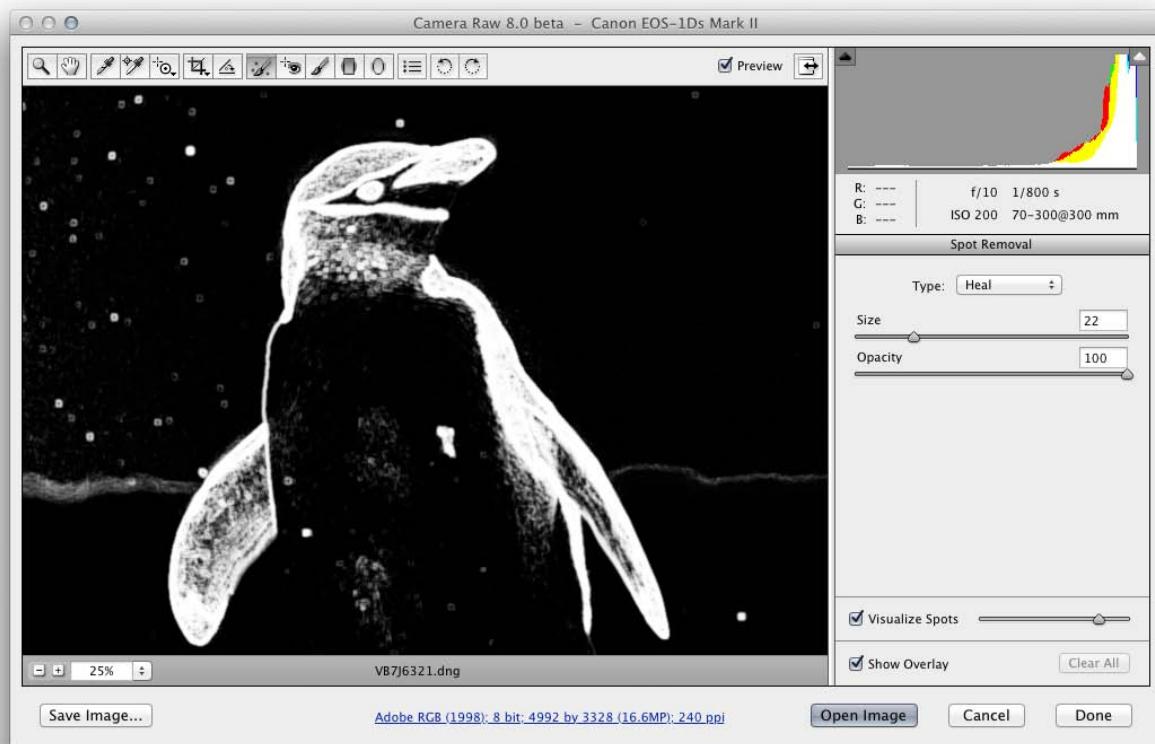


Figure 4 With the Visualize Spots option checked, this can help you locate the areas in an image that need spotting.

Upright corrections

Upright corrections are auto-calculated in Camera Raw based on an analysis of the image. By selecting one of the four options shown in Figure 5 you can apply an instant auto transform correction in place of using the Vertical, Horizontal or Rotate sliders found in the Transform section below. The best way to use this tool is to check the 'Enable Lens Profile Corrections' option in the Profile tab section first before you apply an Upright adjustment and make sure you don't have a rotate crop applied or manual transform adjustments already applied to the image. The impact of a geometric correction is not always as major, but this should help you achieve the best results since letting Upright work with a geometrically-corrected image can make the line detection work better.

The Auto setting applies a balanced correction to the image, which rather than auto-selecting an Upright setting, uses a balanced combination of the options listed below. Essentially, it aims to level the image and, at the same time, fixes converging vertical and horizontal lines in an image. The ultimate goal here is to apply a suitable transform adjustment that avoids applying too strong a perspective correction. When selecting an Auto setting it mostly crops the image to hide the outside areas. However, if the auto adjustment ends up being quite strong some outside areas may become visible as transparent pixels when applying an Auto setting.

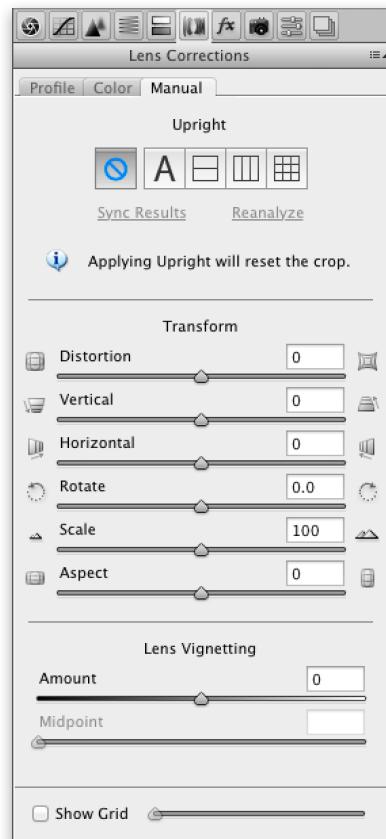


Figure 5 This shows the Manual Lens Corrections controls. Note that if a crop is currently applied to the image, you'll see a message informing you that an Upright correction will reset any crop that's active. If the image you intend to process cannot be corrected after clicking one of the Upright buttons, you'll see here a warning message saying 'No upright correction found'.

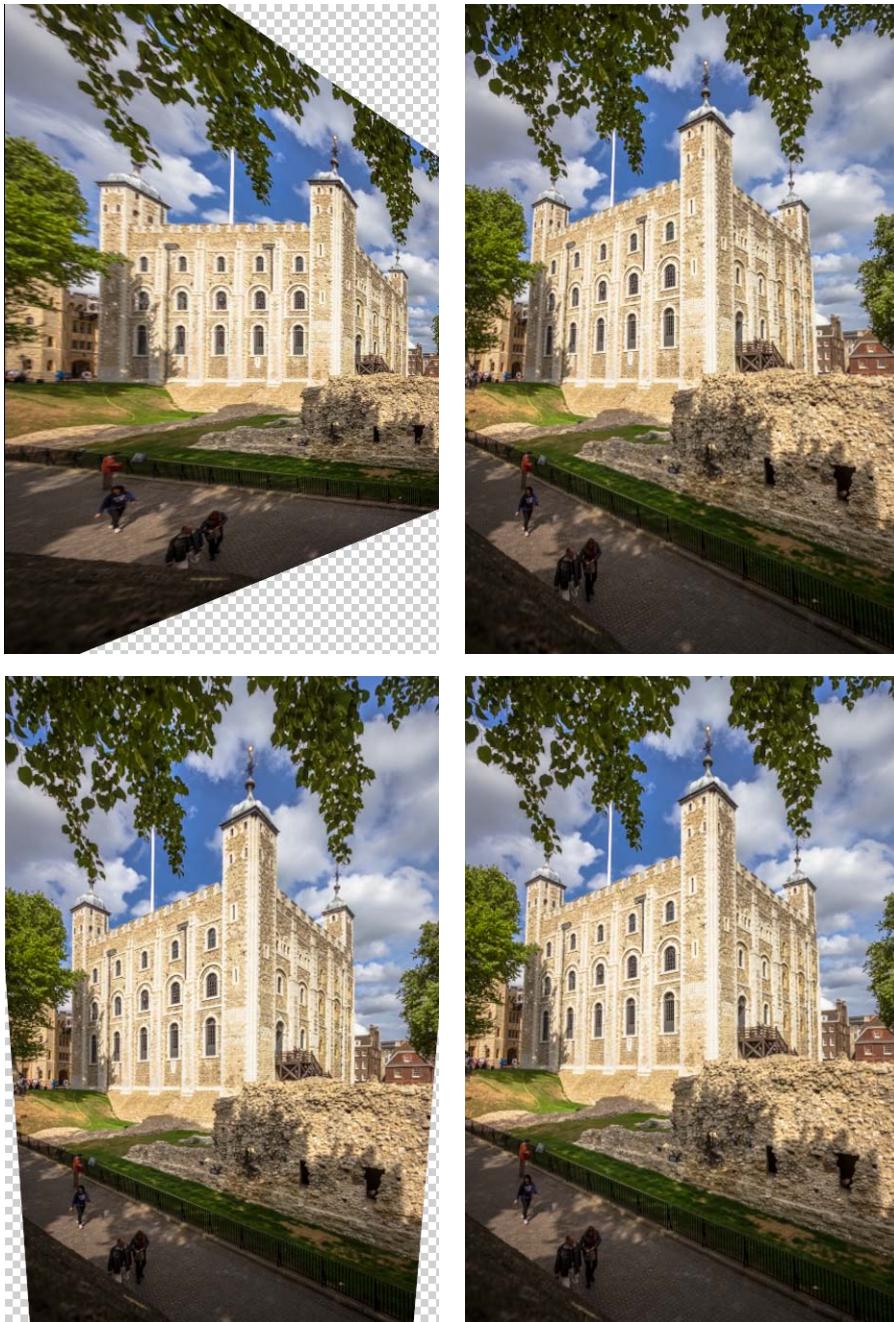


Figure 5 From top left you can see the outcome of a 'Full' Upright adjustment. Top right shows a Vertical adjustment. Bottom left shows an Auto adjustment in which Camera Raw applied an adjustment that combined a level, horizontal and vertical adjustment in a more balanced way and bottom right, a 'Level' adjustment.

Camera Raw as a Photoshop filter

You can now apply Camera Raw adjustments as a filter layer. To do this you ideally want to convert the image first to a Smart Object (Smart Filter) layer. Having done that you can apply Camera Raw as a Photoshop filter, and because you are working on a smart object you can re-edit the Camera Raw settings just as you would when editing a raw image. Some might argue that Camera Raw editing is already available for non-raw images, but it's important to point out that this was previously limited to flattened files saved in the TIFF or JPEG format. The Photoshop Camera Raw filter now allows this. However, in the case of layered images you must distinguish whether you intend to filter a specific layer or all current visible layers. So, before creating a smart object do make sure you have the layer or layers you wish to process correctly selected.

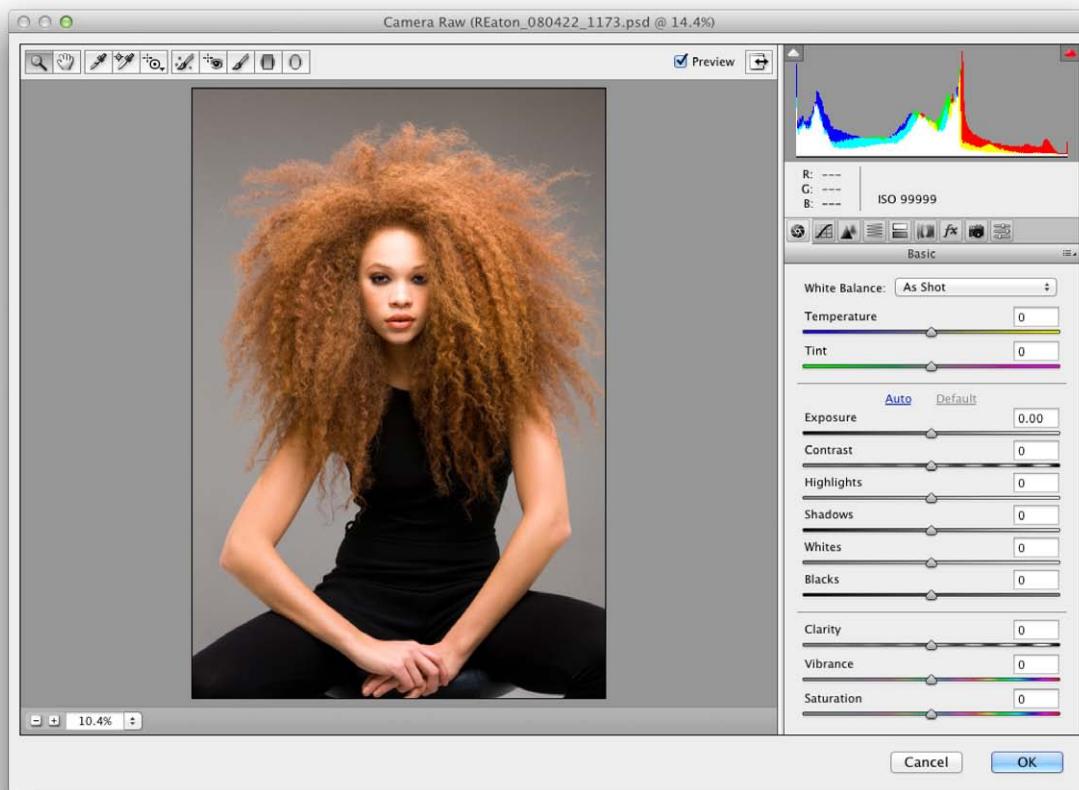


Figure 6 This shows the Camera Raw Filter in use. In this example, the filter was applied to a regular TIFF image opened in Photoshop. Note that the Camera Raw as a filter dialog does not have the workflow options at the bottom.

Photoshop features

Altering the image size

The image size dimensions and resolution can be adjusted using the Image Size dialog (Figure 7). In Photoshop CC this has been updated to provide a new revised user interface, where it should be easier to understand what you are doing when modifying the Width, Height and Resolution settings. The new image preview window shows you what the resized image will look like and can be made larger by resizing the dialog box. You can also click inside the preview and drag to pan the preview image, plus the Image Size dialog settings are now also sticky.

The Resample menu contains a new Preserve Details option, which can offer improved image quality when enlarging an image. This, along with the other resample methods has been allocated a keyboard shortcut (see sidebar) to make it easy to toggle and compare different interpolation methods.

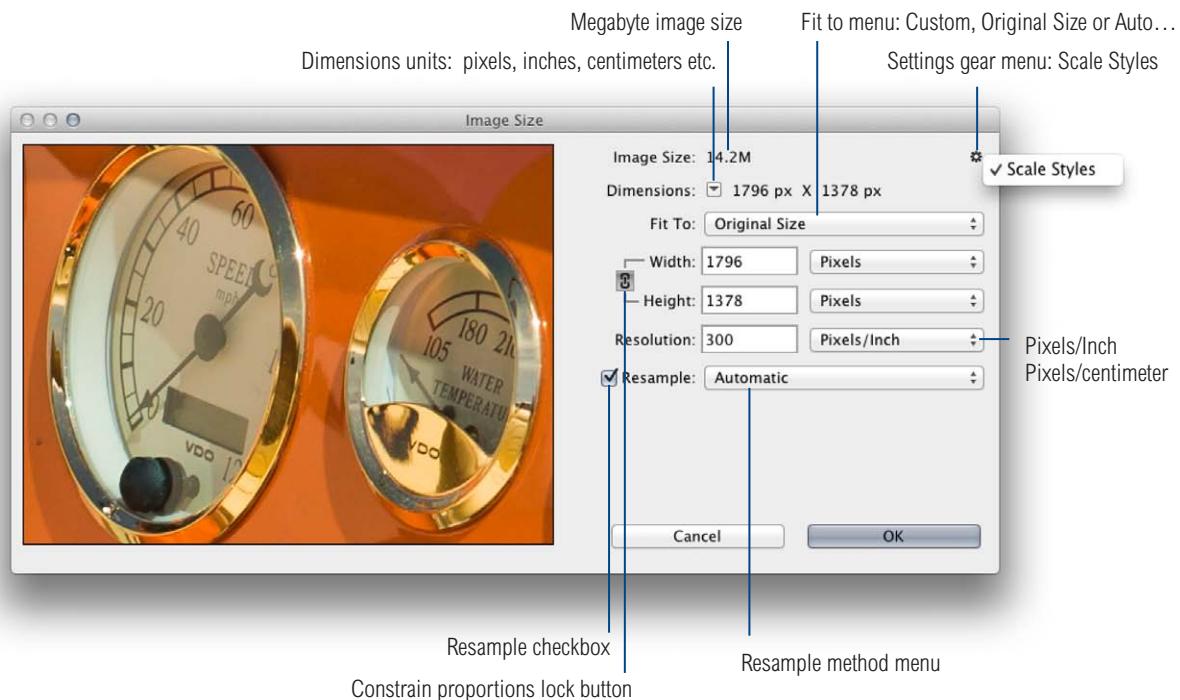


Figure 7 The new Image Size dialog. You now need to go to the ‘Fit To’ menu and select Auto... to open the Auto Resolution dialog shown here. This can help you pick the ideal pixel resolution for repro work based on the line screen resolution.



Live shape properties

When you add an ellipse shape you will see the Live Shape Properties shown in Figure 8. When you add a rectangle or rounded rectangle shape you'll see the Live Shape Properties shown in Figure 9. Here, it is possible to edit the corners of the rectangle shape. Note that the Properties panel only shows these options where an ellipse, rectangle or rounded rectangle path or shape layer is selected.

Smart Shape Properties mode

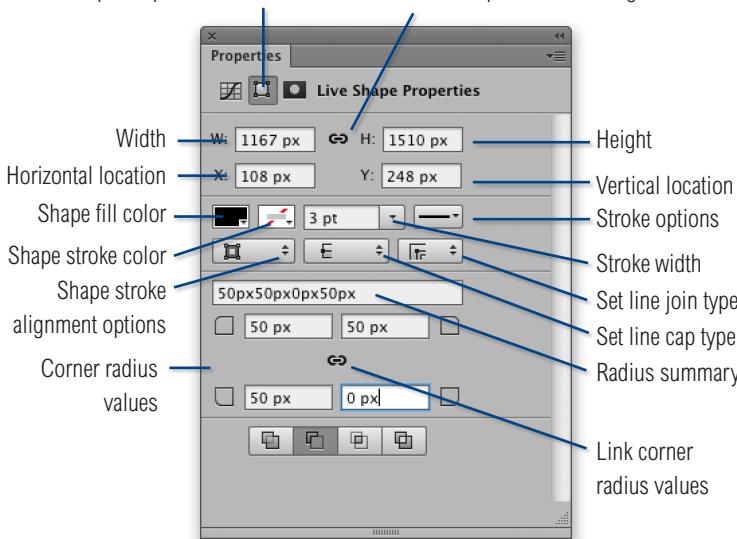


Figure 9 Here you can see the Properties panel showing the Live Shape options, where it is possible to edit the individual corner settings for a rectangle, rounded rectangle shape or path outline. Shown below is the shape outcome for a rectangle shape with these applied settings.

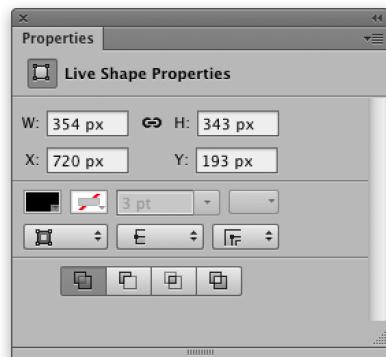


Figure 8 This shows the Live Shapes Properties panel for the Ellipse shape tool.

Shake Reduction filter

At the Adobe Max show in 2011, there was a sneak preview of a new ‘de-blurring’ plug-in that generated a lot of excitement. I think Adobe themselves were caught by surprise at the amount of interest and speculation this created and if anything had to downplay expectations. Well, that filter has now arrived in Photoshop. What it does is correct the camera shake in a captured photo rather than work out how to refocus an out-of-focus image. The way it does this is to interpret the image and look for signs of camera shake, and in particular, clues to the path that a camera moved during an exposure. For example, this will be most apparent in sharp pin-point areas such as catch lights in the eyes. From this the Shake Reduction plug-in is able to calculate a camera shake signature for the image and use this to work out how to reconstruct the scene without camera shake. It’s kind of like a software version of the image stabilizing control found on some lenses and cameras.

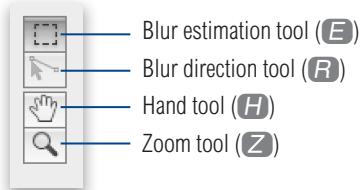


Figure 10 The Shake Reduction filter tools.

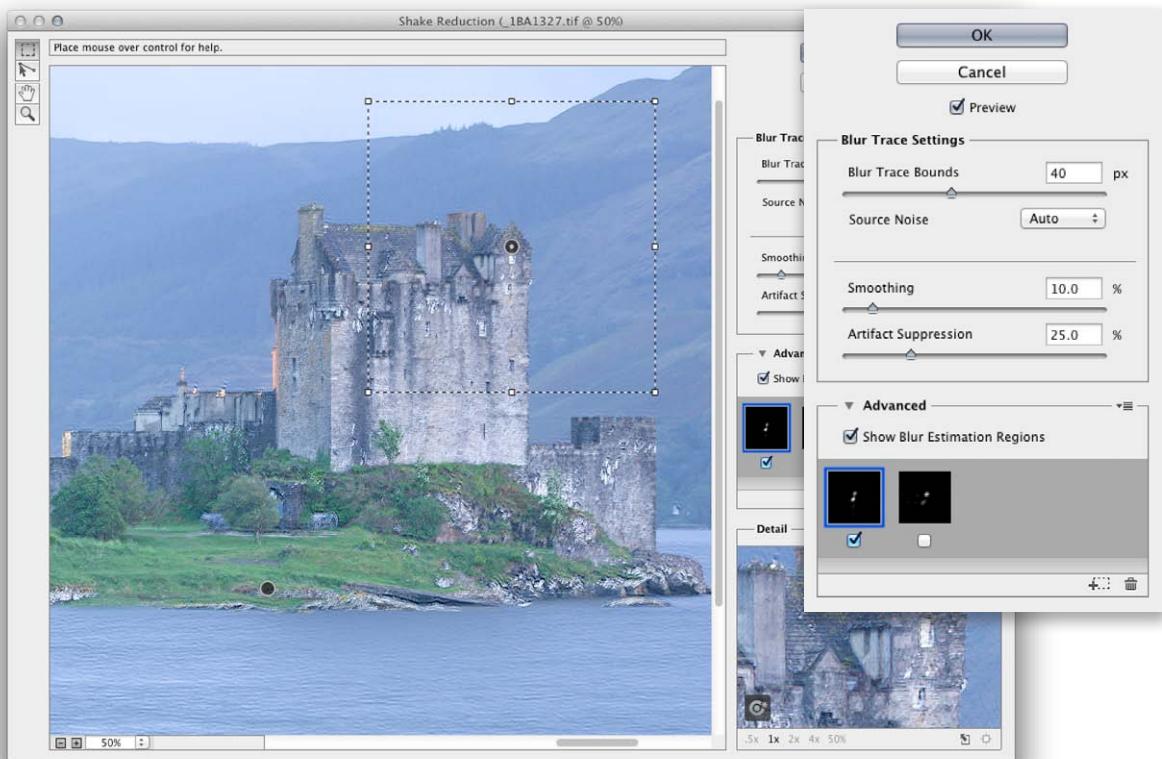


Figure 11 The Shake Reduction filter dialog. In this example, there is one blur trace active with an active blur trace region plus filled pin and one that's inactive (with a hollow pin).

Smart Sharpen filter

The Smart Sharpen filter image processing has been much improved in Photoshop CC and now also includes a Reduce Noise slider in the Advanced options, which can play a key role in suppressing artifacts.

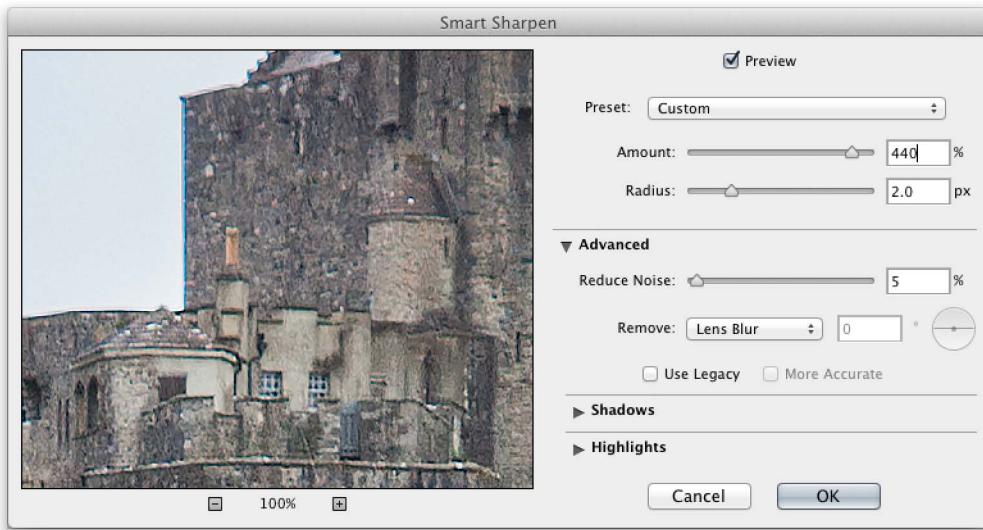


Figure 12 Shown here are the new Smart Sharpen filter options.



Figure 13 An excessive amount of Smart Sharpen this can lead to more noticeable artifacts like those seen in the bottom half of this screen grab. Though I have to say, the Smart Sharpen quality is a lot smoother now in Photoshop CC.

Isolation mode layer filtering

Isolation mode is a new layer filtering option that allows you to filter the active selected layers in a document. This means you can specify a subset of layers within a document and isolate them so that only these layers are visible in the Layers panel (although all other layers will remain visible in the document). Tool use then becomes restricted to just the selected layers, but you can add, duplicate, reorder or delete any of the visible layers while in the filtered state. You can modify an isolated layer selection by targeting a layer and choose 'De-isolate Layer' from the Select menu or contextual menu (use **ctrl** [Mac], or a right mouse-click to access).

You can invoke the isolation mode in a number of ways. You can enable layer filtering via the Layers panel and set the filtering to 'Selected' and click on the filter switch to turn the filtering off. In Figure 14 three pixel layers were active. When layer filtering was enabled using the 'Selected' mode only these three layers remained visible within the Layers panel. Alternatively, make a selection of layers active and enable the 'Isolate Layers' option via the Select menu. To undo this, select 'Isolate Layers' again to disable the filtering.

When either the path selection or direct selection tools are active you can use **ctrl** (Mac), or a right mouse-click to access the contextual menu and choose 'isolate Layers' to enable/disable the isolation mode layer filtering (see Figure 15). Also, double-clicking on an active shape layer path using either of these tools, automatically isolates the targeted layer. Double-click again to de-isolate the layer again.

Although tool usage is restricted to the selected layers only, when the move tool is selected and in auto-select layer mode, you can click with the move tool on the image to auto-add additional layers to an isolation mode filtered selection.

Whenever a layer filter is active most normal layer functions will remain active. This means that you will still be able to edit layers, reorder or delete them. Layer filter settings aren't saved when you close a document, but the layer filtering settings do remain sticky for as long as a document remains open in Photoshop and any layer filters you apply will also be persistent for each individual document. Only one filter type can be active at a time, so it is currently not possible to apply multiple search criteria to the layers in an image. And, when filtering a new document, you will always encounter the normal default layer filtering state when filtering for the first time.

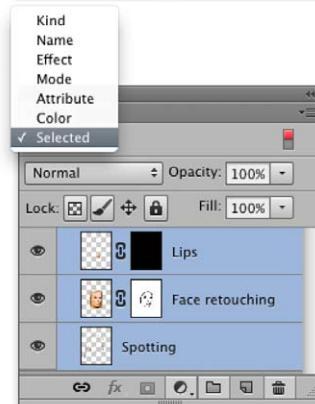
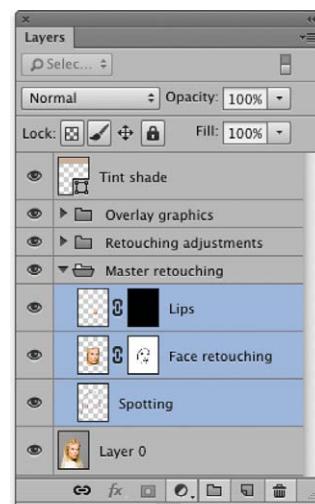


Figure 14 Invoking isolation mode.

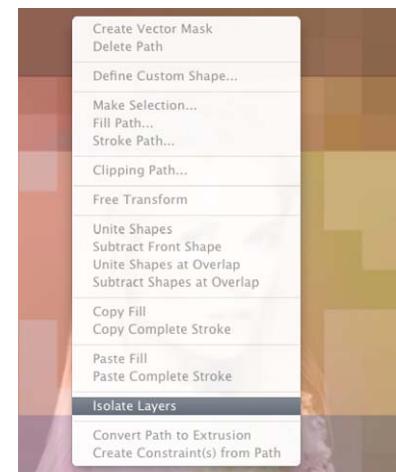


Figure 15 The path selection/direct selection contextual menu.

Multi selection path options

In the Paths panel, it is now possible to select multiple paths, more or less in the same way as you can select multiple layers via the Layers panel (see Figure 16). For example, you can use the `Shift` key to select a range of paths from the paths panel to make them active, or you can use the `⌘ (Mac), Ctrl (PC)` key to make a discontiguous path selection. This latter change does mean that you can no longer load a selection from a path by `⌘ (Mac), Ctrl (PC) + clicking on it`. To do that you will need to select the target path, or paths and use `⌘ Return (Mac), Ctrl Return (PC)` to load as a selection.

Multiple selected paths can be deleted, duplicated or moved. You can duplicate a path or multiple path selection by dragging it to the new path button in the Paths panel, or you can simply `Alt` drag a selected path (or paths) in the Paths panel to create duplicates.

The path selection tool and the direct selection tool are now multi-path savvy. Select the paths you wish to target via the Paths panel and subsequent to that use the path selection and/or direct selection tools to select the targeted paths only as you drag on canvas.

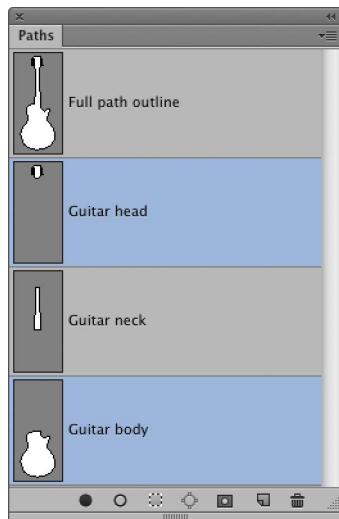


Figure 16 More than one path can be selected at a time in the Paths panel.

Smarter naming when merging layers

When you merge a selection of layers together in Photoshop, the usual convention has been for the merged layer to take on the name of the uppermost layer in that layer selection. Now, Photoshop is a little smarter in that it ignores any of the default layer names such as 'Layer 1' or 'Curves' and uses the topmost, manually renamed layer to name the merged layer. It is a subtle change in behavior that makes some sense. However, a downside of this change (which was actually introduced to Photoshop CS6.1) is that some Photoshop actions can fail to work correctly as a result of this. Something I found out to my cost when updating to CS6.1!

Pen tool Spacebar tip

Pressing down the spacebar while drawing with the pen tool now allows you to reposition a path anchor point. But note that you have to keep the mouse held down as you do this, otherwise, holding down the spacebar simply reveals the hand tool.

Adaptive Wide Angle filter loupe view

At views less than 100%, clicking and dragging a handle will show a 100% loupe view (see Figure 17). This can make precise placement easier.



Figure 17 In Photoshop CC, as you select a constraint handle to edit it, you will now see a magnified loupe appear, as shown here.