

Photoshop for Photographers

Part 6 Lab Sharpen – Supplement

Use Lab Color Mode as a Sharpening too.

This procedure will create an action that can be used as a standard sharpening tool for any percentage of sharpening.

1. Open any image: Why not **17-Lighting10-04123-Blacksmith-with-overcast-sky.tif**?
2. Open the **Actions** palette and click the **5th icon** (2nd from the left—next to the trash can).
3. Give the action a name, such as “**LAB SHARPEN – Ctrl+F11**” and **assign a function key** from the pull down menu and **check the box next to Control**
4. Click **Record**.
Note that the 2nd icon at the bottom lights up RED to let you know that the sequence is being recorded. You will now record each keystroke into you action—so be careful.
5. Keyboard **<Ctrl + A>** then **<Ctrl + C>** then **<Ctrl + D>**. *This puts a copy of the original on your clipboard.*
6. Go to **Image/Mode** and click on **Lab Color**.
7. Go to **Windows/Channels** and click on the “**Lightness**” channel. The image will become grayscale.
8. Go to **Filter/Sharpen/Smart Sharpen**. Set the controls to **Amount: 150, Radius 1.0, Remove: Lens Blur**, Check the box next to **More Accurate**. Click **OK**.
9. Go back to the **Channels palette** and click the **Lab** icon at the top. Image will resume color.
10. Go to **Image/Mode** and click on **RGB Color**
11. Keyboard **<Ctrl + V>**. *This pastes the clipboard copy of your original unsharpened image back on top of the now heavily sharpened background image.*
12. In the **Layers** palette, be sure “**Layer 1**” is active, then click the **3rd icon** at the bottom of the palette to create a “**Layer Mask**.”
13. Back in the **Actions** palette click the **1st icon** (the square dark box) to end the recording. The action is complete.

To use the action:

1. With a new unsharpened image open, Keyboard **<Ctrl + F11>**.
2. Enlarge a critical part of the image to 100%.
3. Then go to the Layers palette and find a new Layer with a Layer Mask. Move the **Opacity** slider to the left until you see the desired amount of sharpening in your image.

The great advantage of this method of sharpening is that you are sharpening only the tonal values of the image and not the color values, thus allowing you to sharpen at a much higher percentage. You still have the advantage of seeing the difference in sharpening percentages as would in any sharpening palette when moving the slider back and forth. And it is quick and easy to use.

It is a “one-size-fits-all” operation. Use it for any degree of sharpening.

To evaluate the final image:

4. Keyboard **<Ctrl + 0>** for full screen image, then hit the “**F**” key until you have a black background. Hit the **Tab** key to remove all menus. Hit **<Ctrl + R>** to remove rulers.
You now have a the image alone within a black screen background—the ideal condition to evaluate the final image.
(To toggle the screen back to normal, hit the same keys again.)

If you have questions, please call me at 407-658-4869 (Best times: Wednesday – Friday 7:30 – 9:30 PM)

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