

Directions for Quick Photoshop Fix for a Jpeg Image Missouri Nature and Environmental Photographers

By Jerry Miller, September 18, 2007

1. Open an image in Photoshop editor and adjust the Levels by selecting:
Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Levels
2. The New Layer Box will open. Select **OK**.
3. Find the three arrows directly below the curve. The right arrow adjusts highlights or white. The left arrow adjusts shadows or black. The center arrow adjusts all the midtones in between. Adjust the highlights first, lowering the arrow until it stops below the start of the black line on the right side of the curve. Next do the same for the left arrow which will adjust the shadows. Now comes the subjective part. Adjust the midtones with the center arrow until the image looks good to you. Watch the left and right sides of the histogram. Anytime a line touches the left or right sides of the graph, information will be lost. See the **Histogram Basics** sheet on the Moneyp website for more information that might help you with this step.
4. Next we will adjust the Saturation by selecting:
Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Hue/Saturation
5. Select **OK**. The Hue/Saturation Box will open. Adjust the **Saturation** (the center arrow) to a point slightly to the right, say between five or ten on the scale below. If the colors begin to look garish or fake, lower the arrow until the color becomes more lifelike and truer to the way the subject looked when you took the photo. **If you have an overall color shift, try moving the Hue arrow to the left or right.** If you want to have a little more fun, try moving the Saturation arrow all the way to the left for a very simple black and white image. You may also adjust individual colors by selecting the master box arrow and selecting the color you wish to enhance or tone down. If, for instance, you have a fall color shot you can enhance those maple trees by moving the Saturation arrow to the right on say the red and yellow channels.
6. The next step is a little harder because we will be creating a new layer to adjust the sharpness of the image. Hold your cursor on the background layer and drag it to the symbol of the square within a square. This will create a new layer called Background Copy that we will use next. Be sure that this layer is highlighted so that you do not adjust another layer by mistake. Next select the following:
Filter> Sharpen > Unsharp Mask or
Filter>Sharpen>Smart Sharpen

For **Unsharp Mask**, when the box opens make sure the preview box is checked. Then from the bottom up, set your **Threshold** at 0, set the **Radius** at 1.1, and adjust the **Amount** from between 25% and 150%. Be sure not to over-sharpen your image. You can tell this by how pixilated the image becomes. If you see the image becoming grainy, lower the number in the Amount box.

For **Smart Sharpen**, (only available in full Photoshop, not Elements) also check to make sure the preview box is checked. Smart Sharpen does not have a Threshold command. Instead, you may choose to correct one of three blur types: Gaussian, Lens or Motion. I usually leave it on **Gaussian**

Blur, but feel free to try the other options. Set the **Radius** at 1.1 and adjust the **Amount** the same way you would if using the Unsharp Mask command.

To learn more about sharpening, see the instructions labeled **Sharpening Techniques** on the Monep website.

7. The last item is to size and save the image. Follow the instructions labeled **Resize an Image for Submission** on the Monep website for this step.