



Automated Actions

Streamline your image-editing workflow by turning repetitive tasks into automated Photoshop Actions

In this tutorial, you will examine ways to trim down the time it takes to perform typical but laborious photo-fixing tasks, so that you can spend more time shooting and less time editing. Some of the most common problems you'll encounter as a photographer are with exposure. Your shots could be under-exposed and lack contrast, as well as being desaturated, for example.

Automated commands such as Auto Tone, Auto Contrast and Auto Color can improve images quickly and easily, but they are likely to introduce unwanted effects such as colorcasts that can make a warm shot look too cool. Actions enable us to automate our photo fixes more effectively.

The term 'Action' is pretty self-explanatory. You can perform a series of step-by-step photo-fixing operations such as adjusting Levels or Stop the recording re-sizing a canvas, and Photoshop will record each step in the editing process as an Action. You can then open a new image and play back the recorded Action to edit the image using the same techniques.

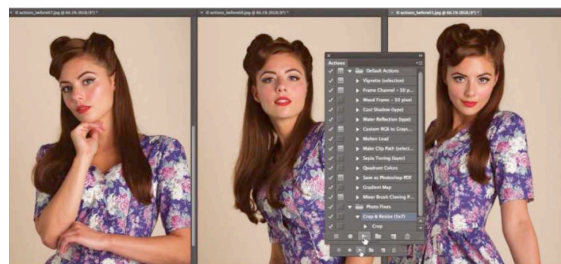
In this tutorial we'll show you how to record your tonal adjustments as you fix an image, turn them into Actions, and apply them to the rest of the photos in the series. You can even apply an Action to an entire folder of shots as an automated operation.

Lights, camera, Action

Create an Action that will crop and resize an image to a specific resolution

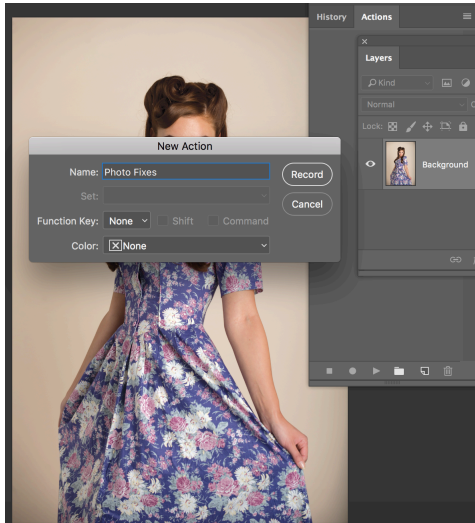
When shooting a model in a studio you may end up with a collection of photos that contain more background space than you would prefer. By cropping the shot in Photoshop you can lose boring bits of background and make the model look more prominent in the frame. You may also want to resize your cropped studio shots so that they have typical print dimensions such as 5x7 inches at 200 dots per inch.

Cropping and resizing a series of similar images would be tedious and time-consuming, but by recording the edits as an Action you only need to perform them once. You can then apply the Action to crop and resize similar images in your series with a click.

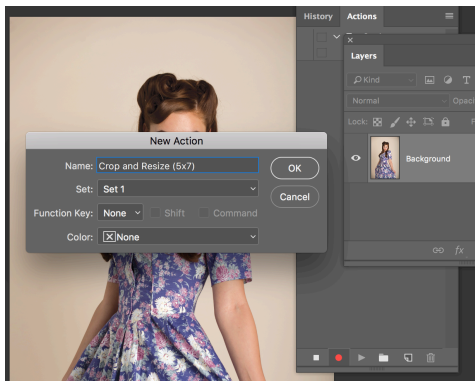


1. Preparing the action

Open one of six images (Ations_before1-6.jpeg) provided. Go to Window > Actions. Throw away any previous saved "actions." Click the Create New Set icon at the bottom of the panel. Name the set 'Photo Fixes'.

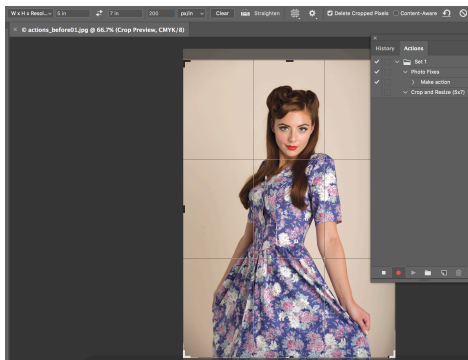


Now click the Create new Action icon. Name the Action 'Crop and Resize (5x7)'. Make sure it goes in the Photo Fixes set. You can also assign a color label. Click Record.



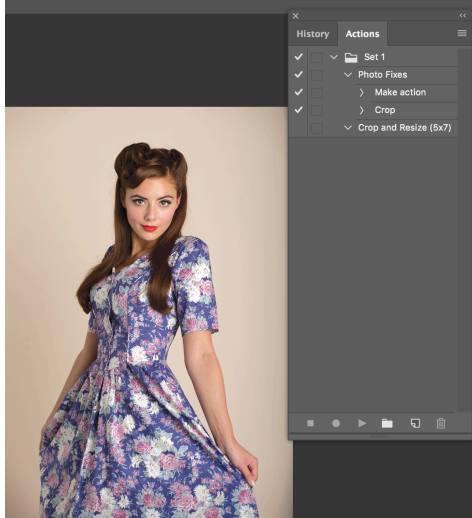
2. Set the crop size

Grab the Crop tool from the Tools panel. In the Options bar menu, choose Size and Resolution. Set Source to Custom. Set Width to 5 Inches. Set Height to 7 Inches. Set Resolution to 200 Pixels/Inch. Click OK to set your crop settings.



3. Stop the recording

Drag the corner handles to tighten the crop overlay around the subject. Hit Enter to lose some of the backdrop Hit the Stop icon in the Actions panel to stop recording the edits. You now have a cropped photo measuring 5x7 inches.



4. Apply the Action

You can now open similarly composed shots in the series. Click your crop and resize Action. Hit the Play Selection button. The images will be automatically cropped and resized to the desired composition and resolution.

