

# RETRO

Actions for Adobe® Photoshop® Elements 11 or newer



## User Guide

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# 1. THE BASICS

## 1.1. About the effects

The 'Retro' is a multi-purpose set of Photoshop Elements actions. You can use them to add beautiful frames to your photos. You can then transform these framed images into old, nostalgic photos using the various aging & color effects. Or, you can create nice retro banners to show off your artwork.

## 1.2. How the actions are organized

The product contains 2 sets of Photoshop actions, optimized for images of **landscape** and **square** shapes, respectively.

The actions in each set are grouped into **4 groups**:

1. **"CHOOSE A FRAME"**
2. **"CHANGE PHOTO EDGES"**
3. **"COLOR TINTS & SHIFTS"**
4. **"ADD AGING EFFECTS"**

- The actions in the first group ("**CHOOSE A FRAME**") let you add a frame to your photo, allowing you to choose from a wide range of options. For example you can apply a beautiful vintage frame with deckled or arched edges; or you can use the more creative options (e.g. apply a laced frame, a frame with stripes, or even turn your photo into an awesome scroll!)

*Adding a frame is the only compulsory step. Then you may use the actions in the other groups, **in any order**:*

- The actions in the second group ("**CHANGE PHOTO EDGES**") can be used to modify the photo edges, allowing you to choose from 4 different edge effects.
- The actions in the third group ("**COLOR TINTS & SHIFTS**") can be used to modify the colors of the photos (apply sepia tones, B&W, cross-processing effects, etc).
- The actions in the fourth group ("**ADD AGING EFFECTS**") will make the photo look very old by applying a range of aging effects (scratches, spots, etc.)

### 1.3. Installing the actions in Photoshop Elements

If you don't know how to install and use Photoshop actions, please refer to this article on PanosFX.com:

<https://www.panosfx.com/installation-troubleshooting/installing-pse-actions>

### 1.4. Removing an older version (or a trial one)

If you have an older product version installed, or if you installed the trial version before purchasing the full one, I recommend you remove it prior to installing the new files. This article shows you how to do it:

<https://www.panosfx.com/installation-troubleshooting/uninstalling>

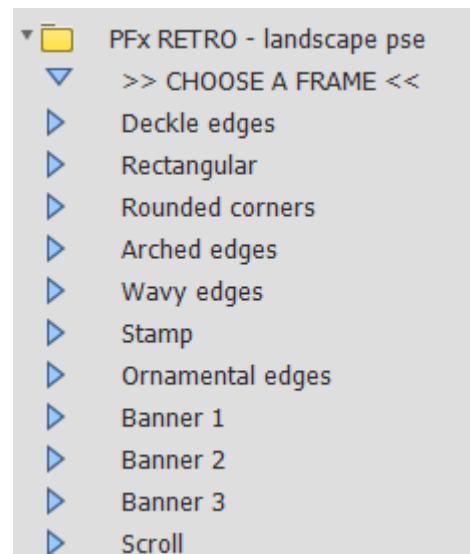
## 2. THE “RETRO – LANDSCAPE” ACTIONS SET

### 2.1. Adding a frame

#### 2.1.1. The various frames

The first group of actions is called “**CHOOSE A FRAME**”. These actions let you add a frame to the photo, choosing from 11 different options:

All actions use **vector graphics** to create the frames. The frames are therefore fully scalable.



The actions are optimized for images of **landscape** shape. It’s very easy to use the framing actions on **portrait** photos. Simply rotate the photo 90° CCW, using the command: **Image > Rotate > 90° Left**, while placing it over the image background (in the next section you’ll learn how to load and place your photos). When you finish, rotate the Photoshop document 90° CW (**Image > Rotate > 90° Right**), to restore the original orientation.

The first 7 actions create the following frames:

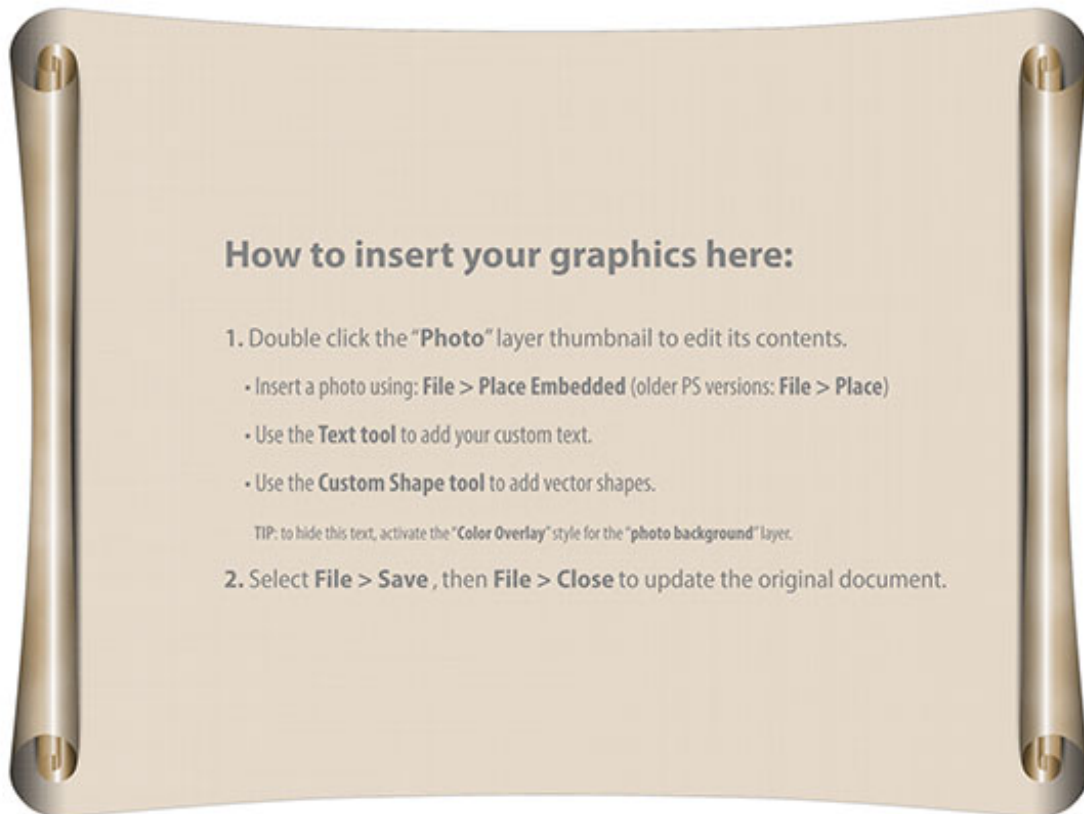




The next 3 actions (“Banner 1”, “Banner 2”, and “Banner 3”) create 3 banner-shaped frames:



The last framing action is called “Scroll”. As indicated by its name, this action creates an impressive scroll from scratch. The action creates two versions, a plain scroll and a scroll with two wooden rods:



### 2.1.2. Running a framing action

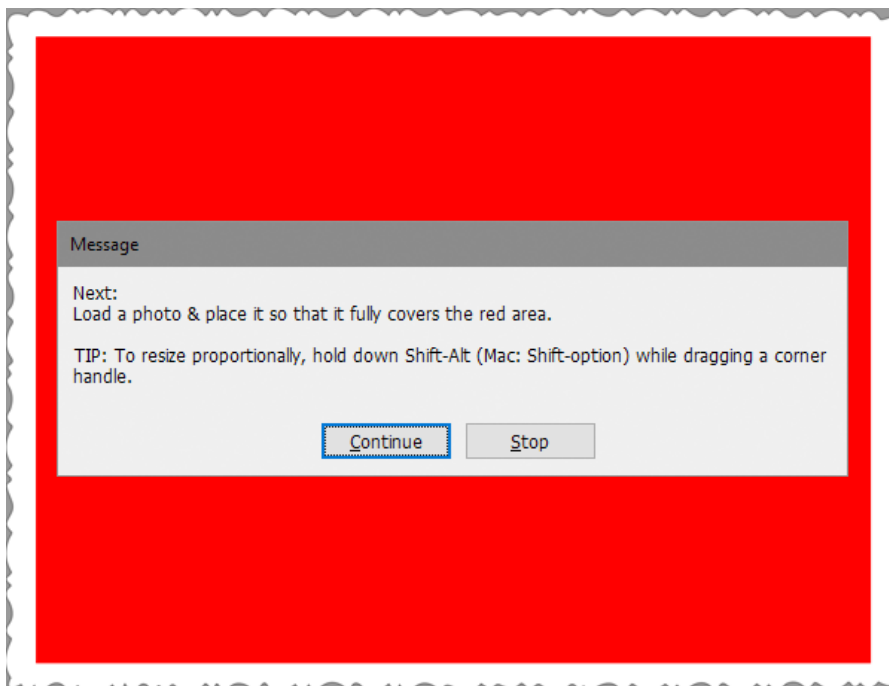
Select one of the 11 framing actions and hit the Play button.

At the beginning you will be asked to enter the **preferred width** (or height) for the framed photo. The actions use vector graphics to create the frames. This technique has obvious advantages:

- You get consistently crispy details, no matter the frame width you enter.
- You can resize the frame when the action finishes.

Enter the preferred size and hit **OK**.

In a few seconds the action will create the frame on your screen, and will ask you to load and place a photo onto the red background:



Hit **Continue**; the file browser window opens up. Select a photo and hit **OK** to open it.

If your image has a different ratio, it won't cover the entire background:





In this case press down **Shift- Alt** (PC) or **Shift- option** (Mac) and drag a corner handle outwards, to resize the image proportionally so that it covers the entire red background:



You can use the arrow keys to nudge the photo. When you finish, double click to confirm and place the photo:



### 2.1.3. Change the frame color, style, and size

- To change the default (white) frame color, double click the “**Frame (dbl click to change color)**” layer and pick a color of your preference. You can also try to add a “Pattern overlay” layer style.
- To change the frame size, select the “**Frame (dbl click to change color)**” layer and press **Ctrl-T** (Mac: **cmd-T**); hold down the **Alt** key (Mac: **option**) and drag a corner handle to resize.

**Note:** The above instructions do not apply to the “Scroll” frame.

## 2.2. Changing the photo edges

### 2.2.1. The 4 edge effects

The second group of actions lets you change the default, straight photo edges. There are 4 different edge effects:



Original edges



Soft edges



Fuzzy edges



Vignette



You can run these actions **in any order**. For example you can run the “Vignette” action and then try the “Fuzzy edges” effect.



### 2.2.2. The “Soft edges”

The “Soft edges” action will make the photo edges gradually fade away. To change the blurriness of the edges, move the **Gaussian blur** filter slider when the action prompts you to do so.

### 2.2.3. The “Fuzzy edges”

The “Fuzzy edges” action uses a combination of Photoshop filters to create more artistic edges. The action will present you a **Filter Gallery** window that combines the **Spatter** and **Accented Edges** Photoshop filters. You can tweak the default settings for these filters. You can even experiment with adding different filters and make the photo edges even more interesting!

### 2.2.4. The “Vignette”

The “Vignette” action will fade away the photo at its periphery. The action begins with laying a vector ellipse over the photo. This shape defines the periphery of the vignette effect. Hold down the **Alt** key and drag a corner handle to change its size. Double click to confirm.

Then move the **Gaussian blur** filter slider to modify the blurriness of the edges.

### 2.2.5. Restoring the original edges

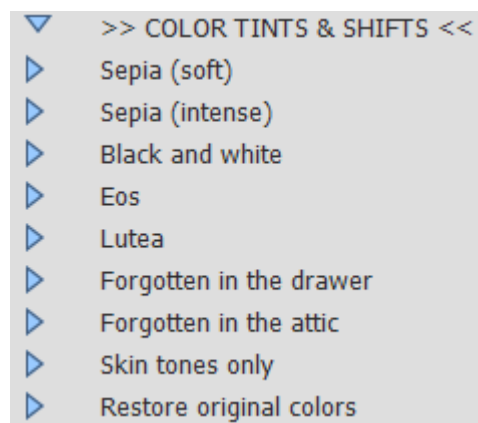
Use the “Restore original edges” action to undo any changes you made, and bring back the original photo edges.

## 2.3. Modifying the photo colors

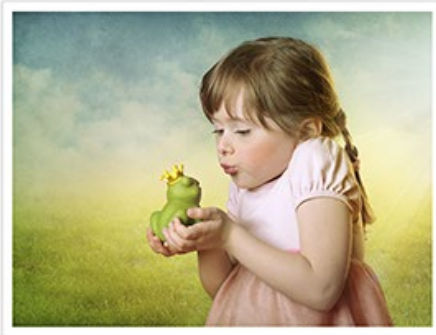
### 2.3.1. The color effects

Old photos have distinctive colors. The actions in this group let you change / shift the colors of your original photos, choosing from 8 different options (sepia, B&W, cross-processing effects, etc).

To undo your changes and restore the original colors, run the last action in this group.



The following image shows these different color effects:



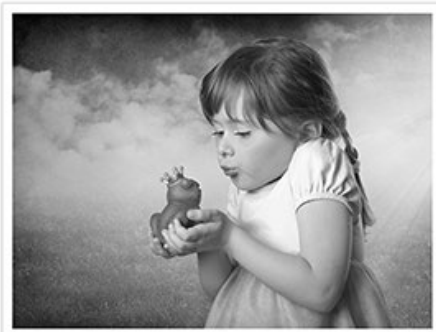
Original colors



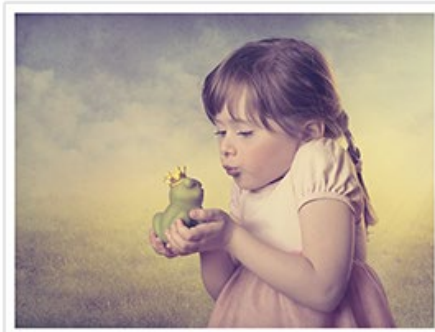
Sepia (soft)



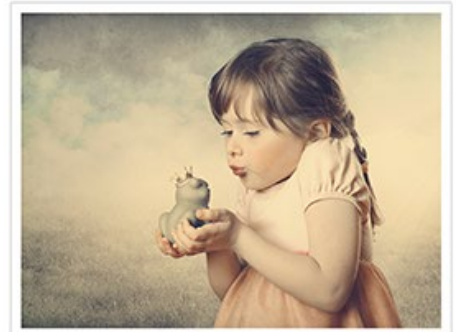
Sepia (intense)



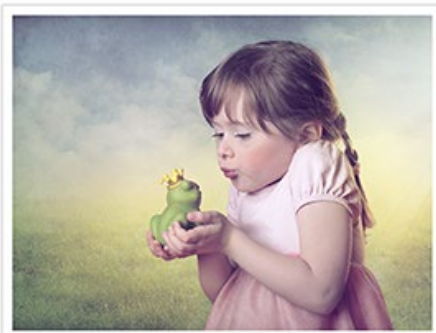
Black and white



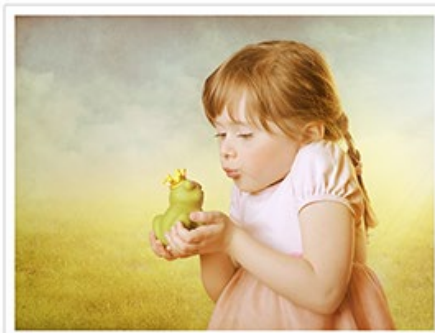
Eos



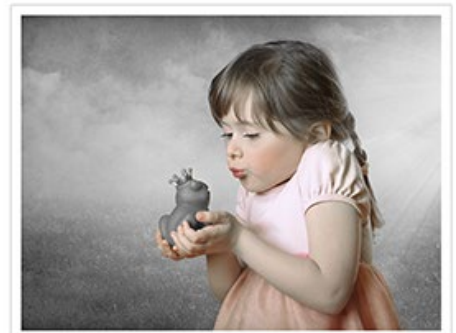
Lutea



Forgotten in the drawer



Forgotten in the attic

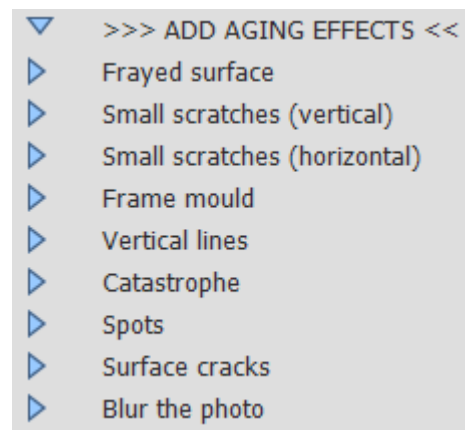


Skin tones only



## 2.4. Using the aging effects

Old photos can be blurry; they have cracks, scratches, spots, etc. If you want to make your photo look very old, then use the actions in this group. You can run the same action more than once. Most effects are random.



### 2.4.1. The “Blur the photo” action

This action uses the **Motion blur** filter to make your photo look blurry.

Move the filter slider to your taste to modify the intensity of the effect. The blurred copy is stored as a **new layer**, above the “Photo” layer.

### 2.4.2. The other aging effects

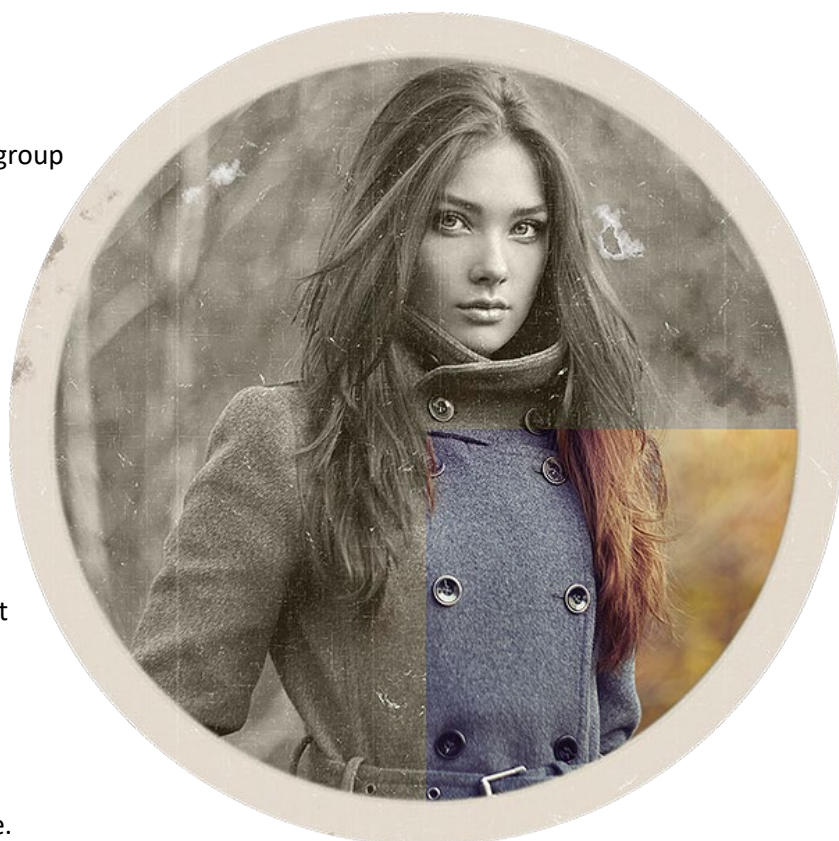
Apart from the “**Blur the photo**” effect, this group contains 8 other aging effects:

- **Frayed surface**
- **Small scratches (vertical)**
- **Small scratches (horizontal)**
- **Frame mould**
- **Vertical lines**
- **Catastrophe**
- **Spots**
- **Surface cracks**

You can use some of them, or all of them. Just don’t overdo it!

Each action creates a different layer:

- You can run the same action more than once.
- If you use the “**Catastrophe**”, the “**Frame mould**”, or the “**Spots**” actions, I recommend you *paint the layer mask* with a *black* brush, to hide some spots.
- Try to change the layer opacity or the blending mode.



## 3. THE “RETRO – SQUARE & ROUND” ACTIONS SET

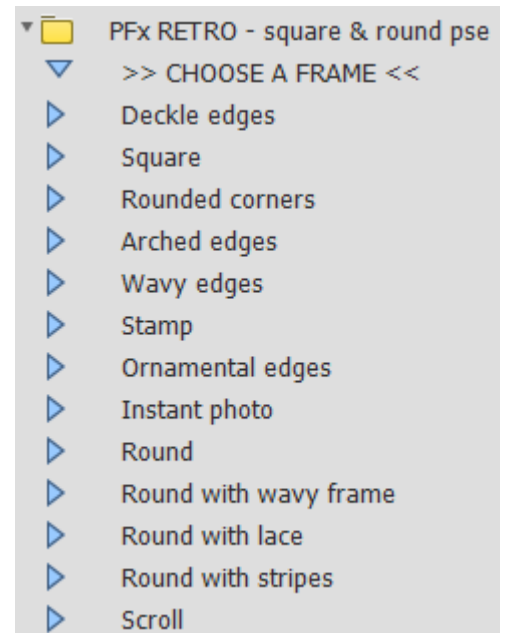
The second set of actions included in the product, is called “**PFx RETRO - square & round**”. As the name indicates, this set creates photos with square and round frames.

The set has exactly the same structure with the “**PFx RETRO - landscape**” set: the actions are grouped into 4 groups that let you add a frame, change the photo edges, modify the photo colors, and add aging marks.

### 3.1. Adding a frame

#### 3.1.1. The various frames

The first group of actions contains 13 different framing actions:



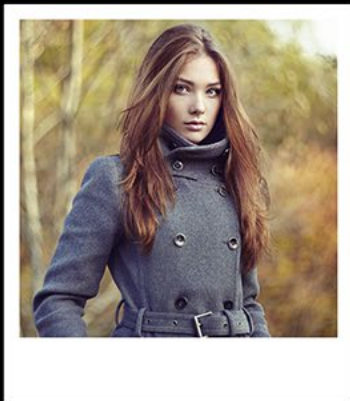
The first 7 actions produce these frames:





The other 6 actions produce the following frames:

Instant photo



Round



Round with lace



Round with wavy frame



Round with stripes



Scroll

To create the photo with frame, use the same steps that were described in [2.1.2](#).

This group of actions includes a special effect, called “**Round with stripes**”. The following section will show you how to tweak this special frame.

### 3.1.2. Using the “Round with stripes” frame:

Select the “Round with Stripes” action from the “PFx RETRO - square & round” set, and hit the play button. The action begins with asking you to enter the preferred frame width. It is the extent from the left stripe to the right stripe. In the next step the action will ask you to load and place a photo, the way described in [2.1.2.](#)

You should now have created an image that looks like this:



#### How to change the color of the round frame:

To change the color of the round frame, double click the “**Frame (dbl click to change color)**” layer and pick a color of your preference.

#### How to change the color of the stripes:

Double click the “**Stripes (dbl click to change color)**” layer and pick a color of your preference.

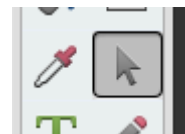
#### How to add a pattern to the stripes:

- Select the “**Stripes (dbl click to change color)**” layer.
- Select: **Layer > New Fill Layer > Pattern** from the menu. Pick a pattern of your preference. You may want to try the “**Color Paper**” patterns that come pre-installed with Photoshop.

### How to change the stripe length:

If you increase the canvas width you may want to increase the length of the stripes. It's easy:

- Select the “**Stripes (dbl click to change color)**” layer.
- Press **Shift-U** as many times as needed to select the **Path Selection Tool** (the black arrow).
- Click on the left stripe; press **Ctrl-T** (Mac: **cmd-T**) and change the stripe length.
- Click on the right stripe; press **Ctrl-T** (Mac: **cmd-T**) and change the stripe length.



If you have any questions, please use the contact form on my site, or use the site forum.

Panos Efstathiadis

[www.PanosFX.com](http://www.PanosFX.com)



The photos used in this guide were kindly provided by [Shutterstock](https://www.shutterstock.com). The Shutterstock IDs are as follows:



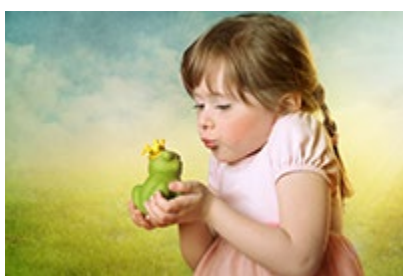
[107513486.jpg](#)



[62867017.jpg](#)



[288644087.jpg](#)



[100157897.jpg](#)



[533865154.jpg](#)



[221483137.jpg](#)