

PHOTO CORNERS - SLITS

Photoshop actions

For PS CC, CS6, CS5, CS4, CS3



User Guide

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1. About the effects.....	1
1.2. Installing and running Photoshop actions	1
1.3. Removing an older (or trial) version	1
2. HOW THE ACTIONS ARE ORGANIZED	2
2.1. The action sets	2
2.2. The contents of the 5 main sets	3
2.3. The contents of the “Xtra frames-Slits actions” set.....	4
3. How the actions of the MAIN sets work	5
3.1. Define the preferred size of the photo with slits.....	5
3.2. Load and place your photo	6
3.3. Create the shadows of the slits	7
3.4. Create the frame shadow	7
3.5. Hide / Show the slits.....	8
4. The extra frames set	10
4.1. The extra frames	10
4.2. The actions	11
5. USEFUL TIPS.....	12
5.1. Switch a slit style from bright to dark (and vice-versa).....	12
5.2. Working with photos of portrait orientation.....	13

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. About the effects

The “Photo Corners – Slits” is a set of Photoshop actions that make your photos look mounted to the background through beautiful corner slits.

The product includes an impressive assortment of different slits and photo frames. The use of vectors produces consistently excellent results, regardless the size of the final photo. The actions are very sophisticated yet particularly easy to use.

1.2. Installing and running Photoshop actions

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

<http://www.panosfx.com/installation-troubleshooting/installing-photoshop-actions>

1.3. Removing an older (or trial) version

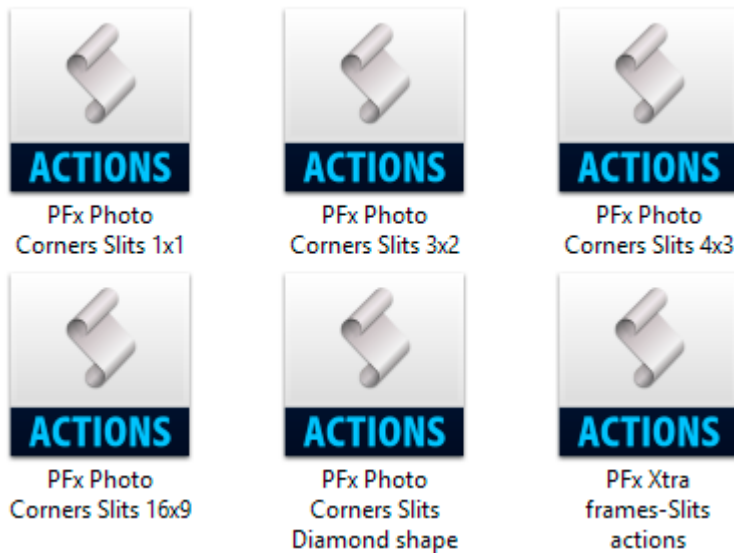
If you have an older product version installed, or if you installed the trial version before purchasing the full one, I recommend you remove it prior to installing the new files. This article shows you how to do it:

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

2. HOW THE ACTIONS ARE ORGANIZED

2.1. The action sets

The full version contains 6 different files (action sets).



The first 5 sets produce the slits. I'll be referring to them as the '**main sets**', in this guide.

- *PFx Photo Corners Slits 1x1*
- *PFx Photo Corners Slits 3x2*
- *PFx Photo Corners Slits 4x3*
- *PFx Photo Corners Slits 16x9*
- *PFx Photo Corners Slits **Diamond shape***

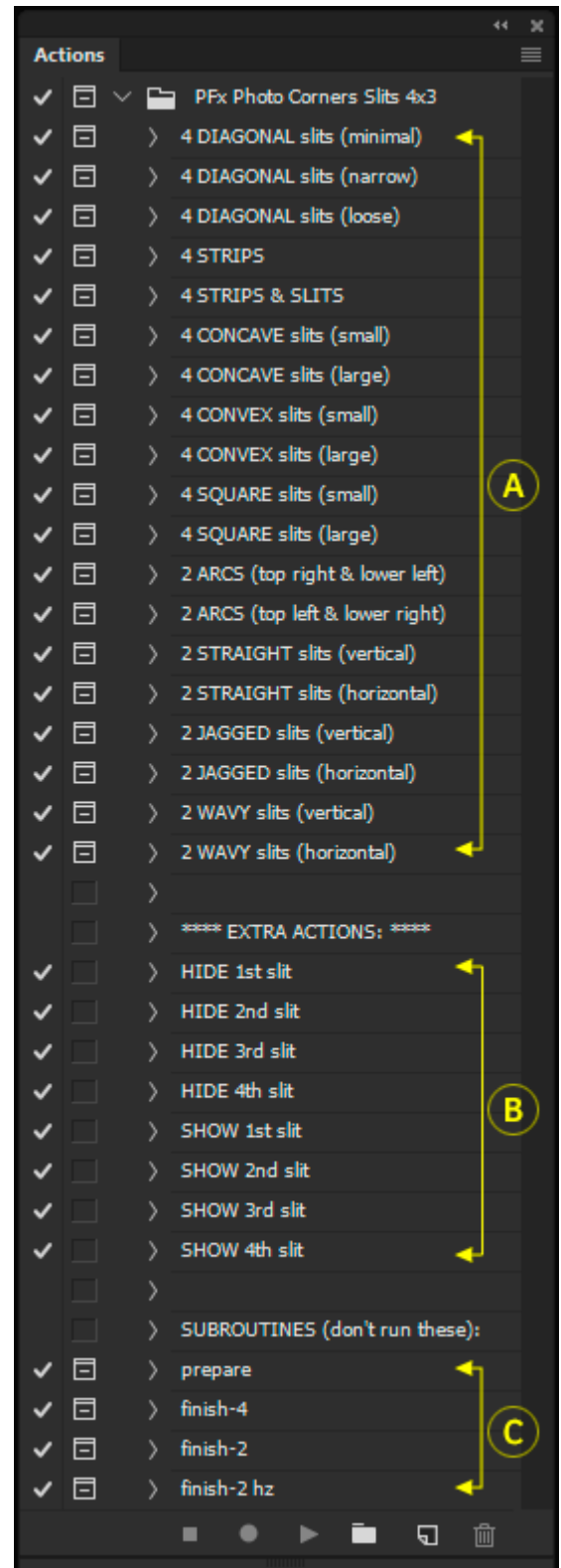
The **numbers** at the end of each filename indicate the **aspect ratio** of the photo used. The actions in the fifth set create a special effect, with the photo having a diamond shape (a square, rotated by 45 degrees).

- The last set is called "*PFx Xtra frames - Slits actions*". These actions let you change the default photo frame.

2.2. The contents of the 5 main sets

Each one of the main sets contains 3 groups of actions:

- The first group **(A)** contains the core actions that create the various types of slits. You must run **one** of these actions.
- The actions in the second group **(B)** let you hide (and bring back) one or more slits.
- The last group **(C)** contains the ‘subroutine’ actions. Do **not** run, delete or rename them; these actions perform specific tasks and work together with the actions in the first group.



2.3. The contents of the “Xtra frames-Slits actions” set

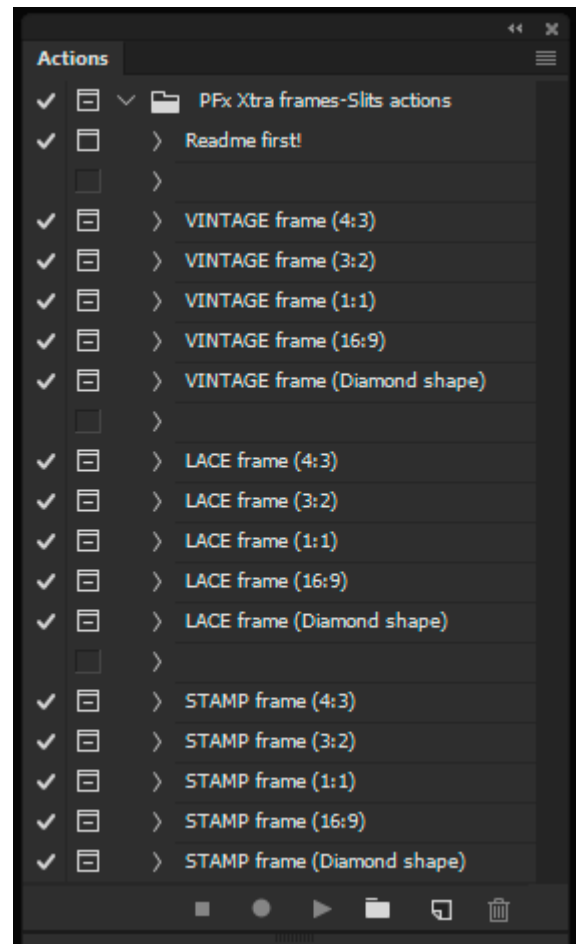
The actions of this set are complementary to the 5 main sets; you must process your photo with the Photo Corner Slits actions before using these ones!

The last set of actions is called “PFx Xtra frames-Slits actions”.

These actions let you change the default rectangular photo frame.

The set contains 3 groups of framing actions: “**Vintage**”, ‘**Lace**’ and ‘**Stamp**’. Each group contains 5 actions that are optimized for different aspect ratios (as indicated by the numbers at the end of the action names).

You must use the correct action, the one that is optimized for the aspect ratio of the photo you created with one of the main sets.



3. HOW THE ACTIONS OF THE MAIN SETS WORK

In this chapter we will review how the actions of the main sets work.

We'll start with describing the actions that produce the slits. You must run one of these actions.

3.1. Define the preferred size of the photo with slits

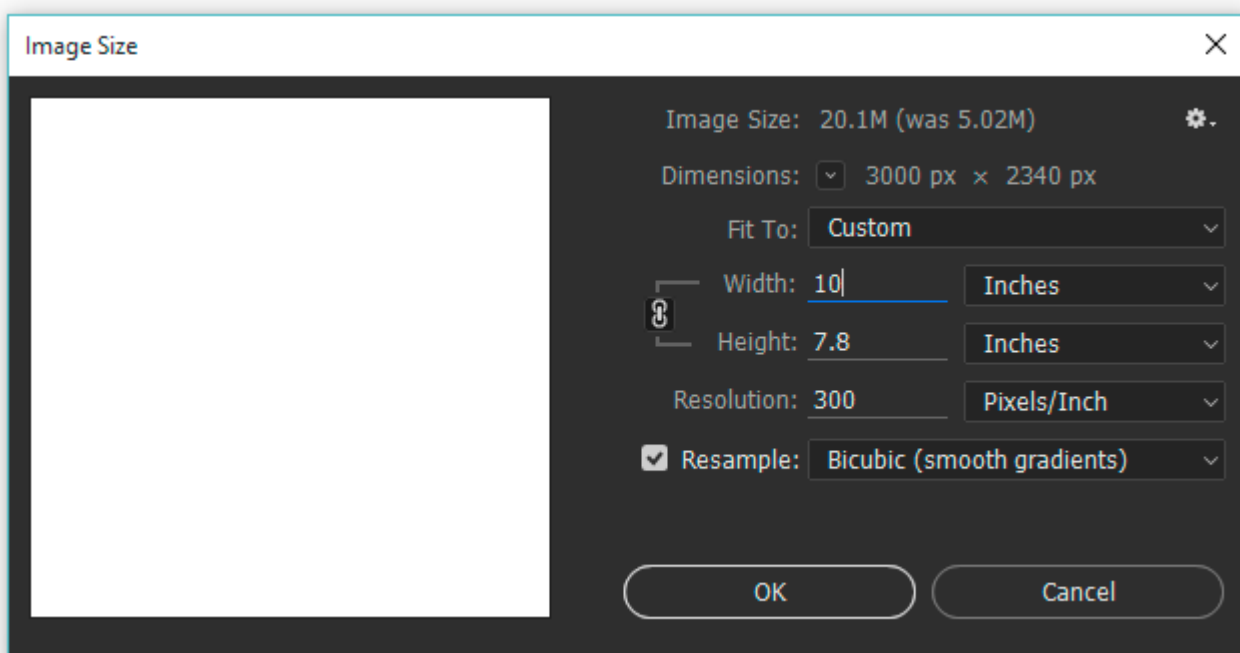
At the beginning the action asks you to define the width (or height) of *the area covered by the photo and the slits*. This is extremely handy if you know the size of your 'canvas'. This canvas can be e.g. an album page or a fixed-size web gallery. If you know the canvas size, you can decide how much of this space will be allocated to the photo with slits.

Let me give you an example: I want to create an album page that shows a photo with slits. The size of the album page is 12 x 12 inches. I decided to load the the 'PFx Photo Corners Slits 4x3' set and use the '4 CONCAVE slits (small)' action.

The 'Image Size' window shows up. Here you choose the units (pixels, cm or inches) and you enter your preferred value in the 'Width (or 'Height') field. If you change the width, the height is adjusted automatically (and vice versa). The size you see here is a very precise approximation of the size you will get, when the action finishes.

The album page is 12 inches wide. I want to leave 1 inch (margin) to the left and 1 inch to the right of the photo with slits. Therefore the width of the photo with slits is $12 - 2 = 10$ inches.

Back to the Image Size window: when I enter 10 inches in the width field, I am informed that the final photo with slits will cover an area of 10 x 7.8 inches. I am happy with that and I hit OK to move on:



3.2. Load and place your photo

In a few seconds the action creates the position where you will place your photo and prompts you to load an image file. Hit OK and select a photo from your hard disk.

In my example I used the 'PFx Photo Corners Slits 4x3' set, which creates a position of **4:3** aspect ratio:



If your photo has the *same* aspect ratio, it will fit perfectly onto its position. The gray background won't be visible. Double click to move on.



If your photo has a *different* aspect ratio, it won't cover fully the gray background:



In this case, hold down **Shift-Alt** (PC) or **Shift/option** (Mac) and drag a corner handle to resize the image. Reposition the photo with the arrow keys, if necessary.

When finished, double click to move on.

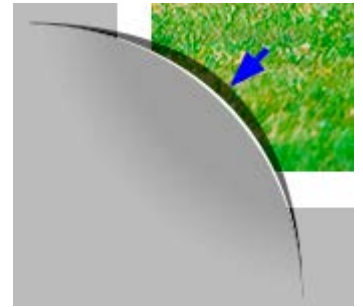
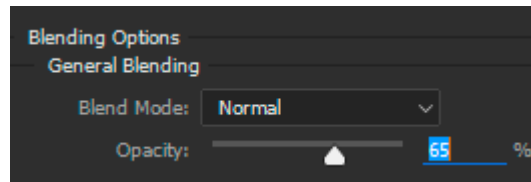


3.3. Create the shadows of the slits

The next two steps involve the modification of the slits' shadows.

In the first step you can adjust the opacity of the shadows:

The layer styles window shows up. Move the master **opacity** slider to preference (default: 65%). Observe how your changes affect the shadows and hit OK to move on.



In the second step you can blur the slits' shadows to your liking. Move the Gaussian blur slider and observe the change in the shadow edges. Hit OK to move on.



3.4. Create the frame shadow

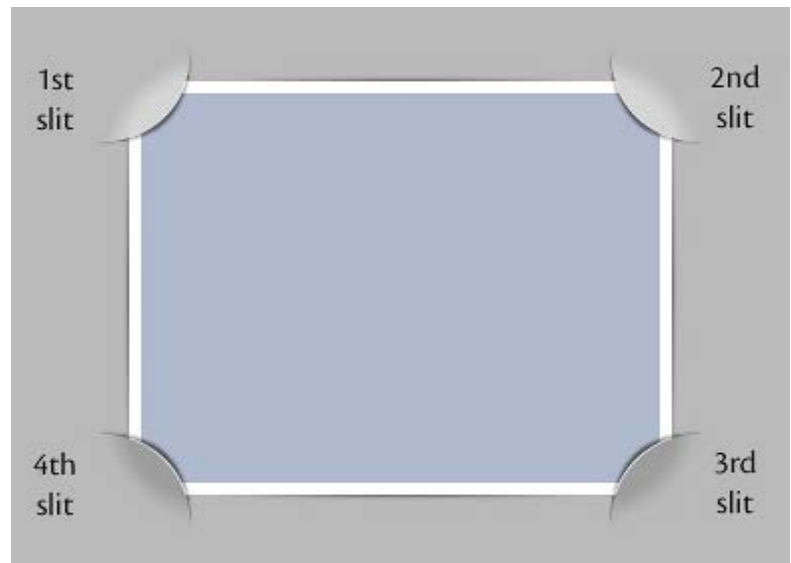
The last part of the action adds a shadow layer under the white frame. Move the slider of the Gaussian blur filter and observe the change in the frame shadow.



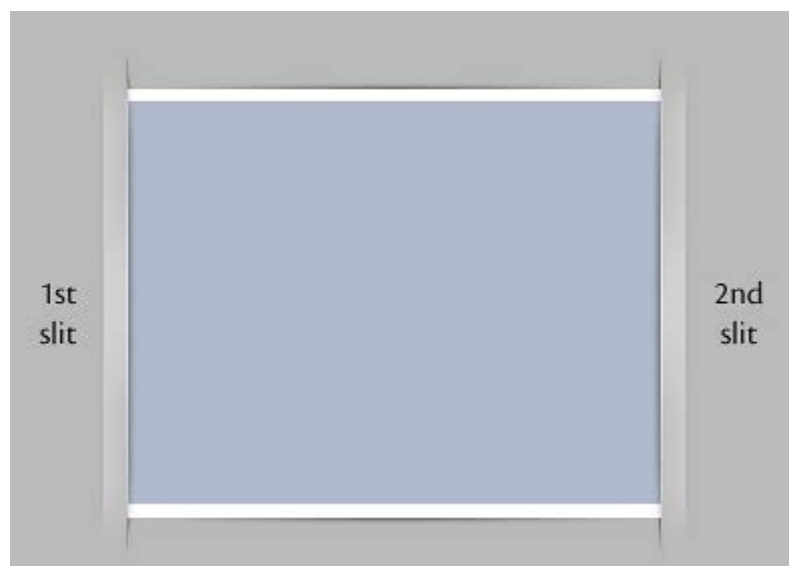
3.5. Hide / Show the slits

The slits produced by the actions are referred to as the '1st slit', the '2nd slit', the '3rd slit' and the '4th slit'.

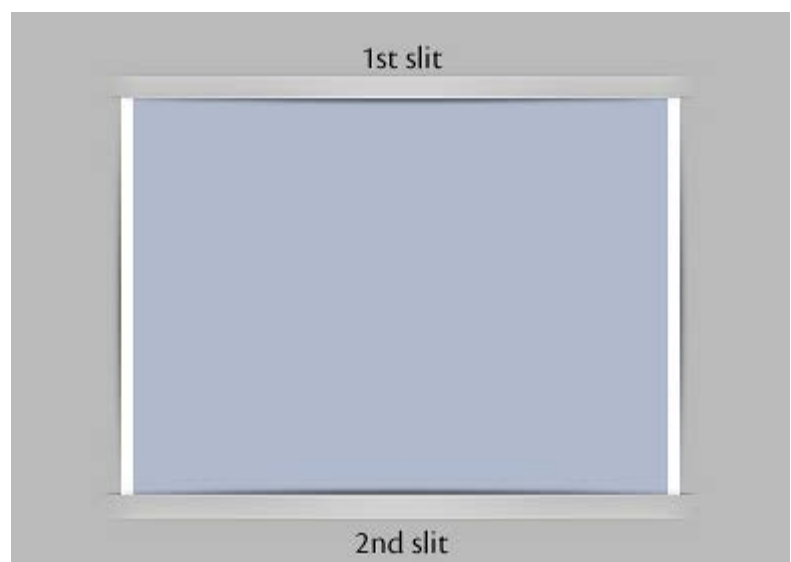
In the 4 slits-actions, the 1st slit is the one on the **upper-left corner**. The other slits are numbered in a clockwise manner:



In the actions that produce 2 vertical slits or '2 arcs', the 1st slit is the one on the **left**:



In the actions that produce 2 horizontal slits, the 1st slit is the one at the **top**:



Now that you know how the slits are numbered, you can use:

- The HIDE actions in the second group, to hide any slit.
- The SHOW actions, to bring back a hidden slit.

This way you can create very interesting variations of the effect. In the example below, I hid the second and the fourth slit:



4. THE EXTRA FRAMES SET

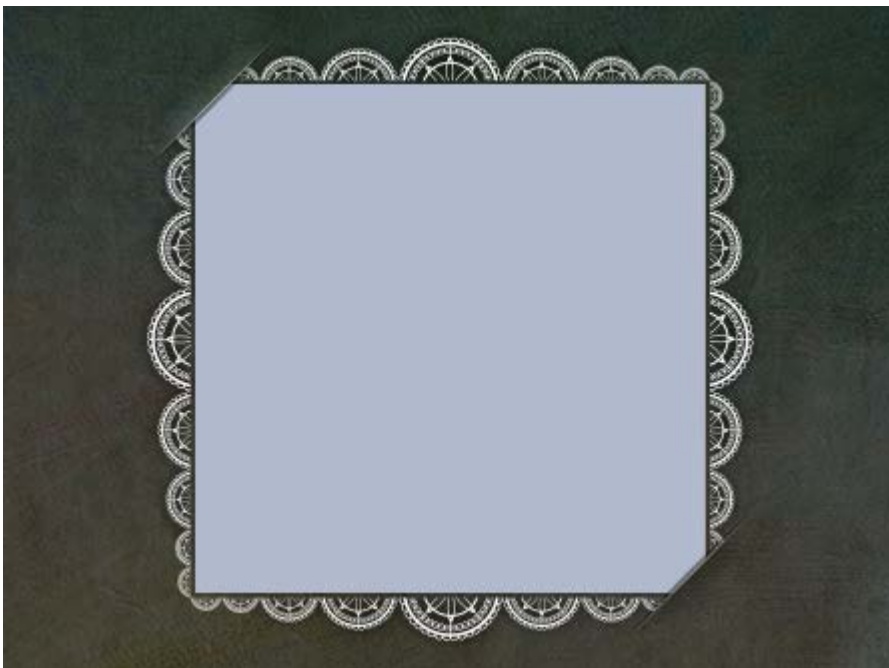
4.1. The extra frames

The actions of the main sets create a rectangular photo frame. The actions in the “Extra Frames” set let you change this frame, giving you the following options:

The “Vintage” frame style:



The “Lace” frame style:



The “Stamp” frame style:



4.2. The actions

These actions work complementary to the core actions. If you try to use them on a flat image, you will get errors. You need to have opened the layered Photoshop image with the slits, prior to using these actions.

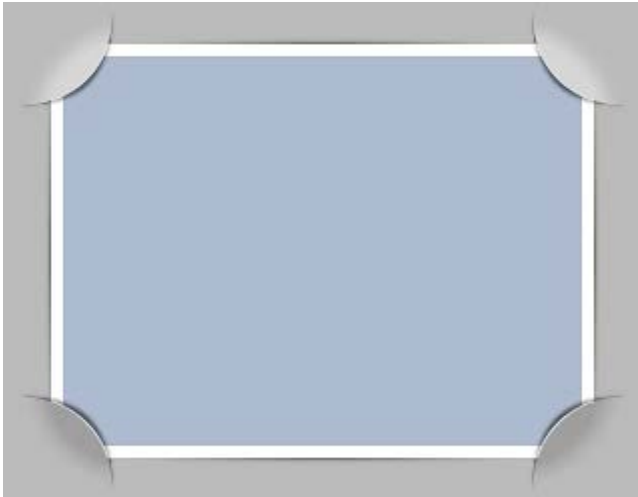
As was mentioned in 2.3, there are 3 groups of actions in this set. Each group contains 5 actions that are optimized for different aspect ratios (as indicated by the numbers at the end of the action names).

You must use the correct action, the one that is optimized for the aspect ratio of the photo you created with one of the main sets.

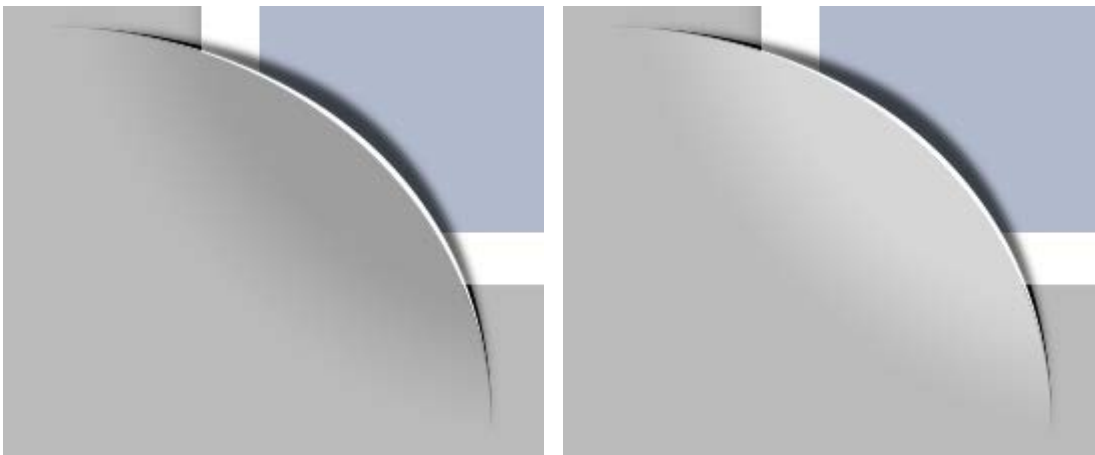
5. USEFUL TIPS

5.1. Switch a slit style from bright to dark (and vice-versa)

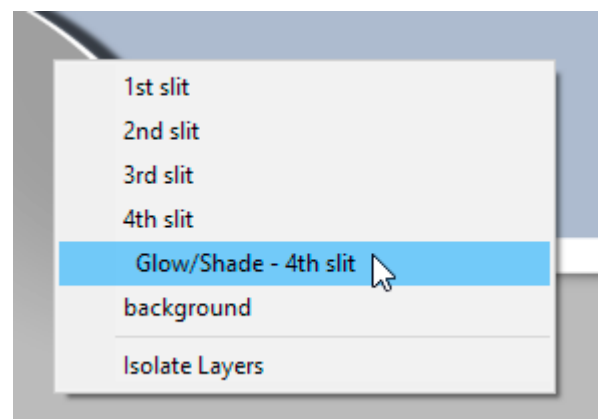
In the 4-slits actions, the upper two slits are brighter while the lower two slits are darker:



It's very easy to switch the style of a slit from bright to dark (and vice versa).



- Press **V** to select the move tool.
- Right-click on the area of the slit that you wish to change.
- Select the **Glow/Shade** layer.
- Press **Ctrl-I** (PC) or **cmd-I** (Mac) to invert the brightness.

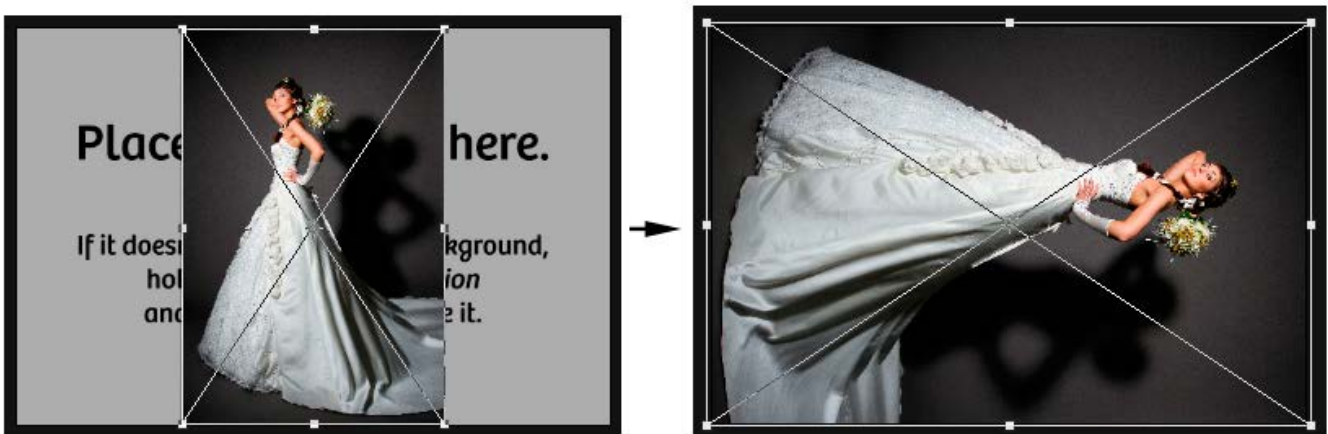


5.2. Working with photos of portrait orientation

By default the actions create a photo of landscape orientation. You can use the same actions on portrait photos. Here's what you need to do:

Run one of the core actions. In a few seconds the action will prompt you to load a photo.

Double click to load the image file. Hold down **Shift** and drag the upper-right corner handle downwards, to rotate the photo by 90 degrees. Hold down **Shift-Alt** (PC) or **Shift-option** (Mac) and drag a corner handle outwards, to resize the photo, so that it covers the entire background. If necessary, use the arrow keys to nudge the photo:



When finished, double click to continue. When the action is complete, rotate the entire document by 90 degrees using the command: **Image > Image Rotation > 90° Counter Clockwise**

The last thing you need to do is to invert the brightness of the upper right and the lower left slits, using the steps described in 4.1.



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

Panos Efstathiadis

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