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KNOW HOW TRANSFER
the photography knowledge hub



Introducing Shape

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Actions

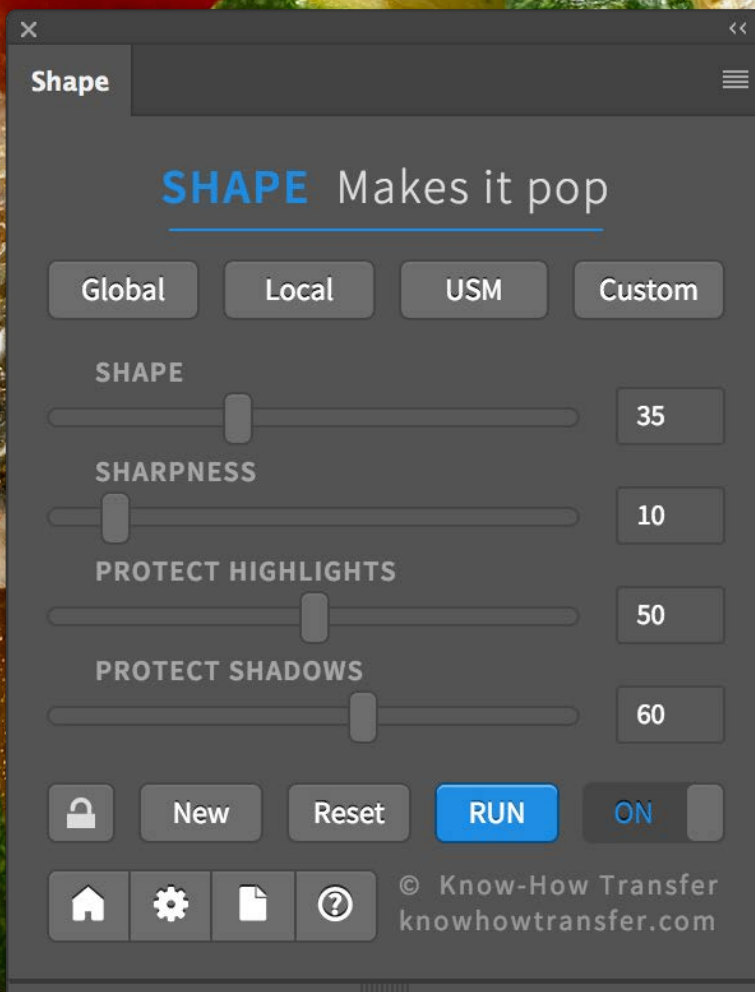
Shape + others

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Italiano



Shape Midtones Global/Local Contrast Manager

User Manual - Version 1.1 - April 2020

Introducing Shape

Introducing Shape

We have been working on Shape in the last twelve months capitalizing the know-how achieved developing plug-ins like Wow!, Next, Mask Equalizer and Double USM. We set out to develop this new outstanding plugin that, we are sure, will soon become a must in your workflow.

Before to launch Shape, Roberto Bigano, (who leads Know-How Transfer) tried Shape with several already good master files previously post-produced using Photoshop or other software, and plugins with a significant and sometimes unbelievable improvement.

Beta testing involved photographers from different countries and of course, we strongly encourage you to send feedbacks.

Midtones prevalent variable contrast

In just one step, Shape adds contrast and sharpening to mid-tones thanks to the masking tool that protects highlights and shadows. Using the prefs panel, Shape allows a choice of different global/local contrast balancing, color mode, or color boost.

Protection linked to contrast, or independent

The “Protect” sliders are crucial in the Shape workflow. By default, their values are linked to the shape, but the user can easily tweak them independently by unlocking the lock icon.

For advanced masking, a bundle with Mask Equalizer is available.

Compatibility

Photoshop CC and above

MAC OSX 10.7 Lion and above

WIN 7 and above (64bit only)

Global and local contrast balance

The current default setting is a balance of global (prevalent), and local contrast, that pops up shape and colors with no halos. The user can get a different global/local mix by raising or reducing the Low-frequency value in preferences.

32bit / Multi-core processing

The Shape plugin engine works internally at 32bit without color quantization and stretching the local histogram much better. With Shape, gradations, highlights, and shadows are smoother than ever before.

[Read More](#)

Shape Preferences

☒ Live Preview

Color mode

☐ RGB

☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost: 12

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius): 3

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 50

Low-Frequency (high radius): 200

Custom Preset

Shape: 35

Sharpness: 10

Highlights: 50

Shadows: 60

High-Frequency (low radius): 3

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 30

Low-Frequency (high radius): 100

☐ RGB

☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost: 10

Reset to Defaults

Save

Improved default settings

The default Color Boost value is now 12.
The default Advanced Options (Frequencies) are now 3, 50, 200

Presets including advanced options

All the presets now also include the Color Mode, the Color Boost and the Frequency values. So users can compare with two clicks Global and Local contrast settings.

Custom Preset

Now the user can save a custom preset easily accessible by a quick button.
This preset can be fully customizable in the Preferences Window.

Global

Local

USM

Custom

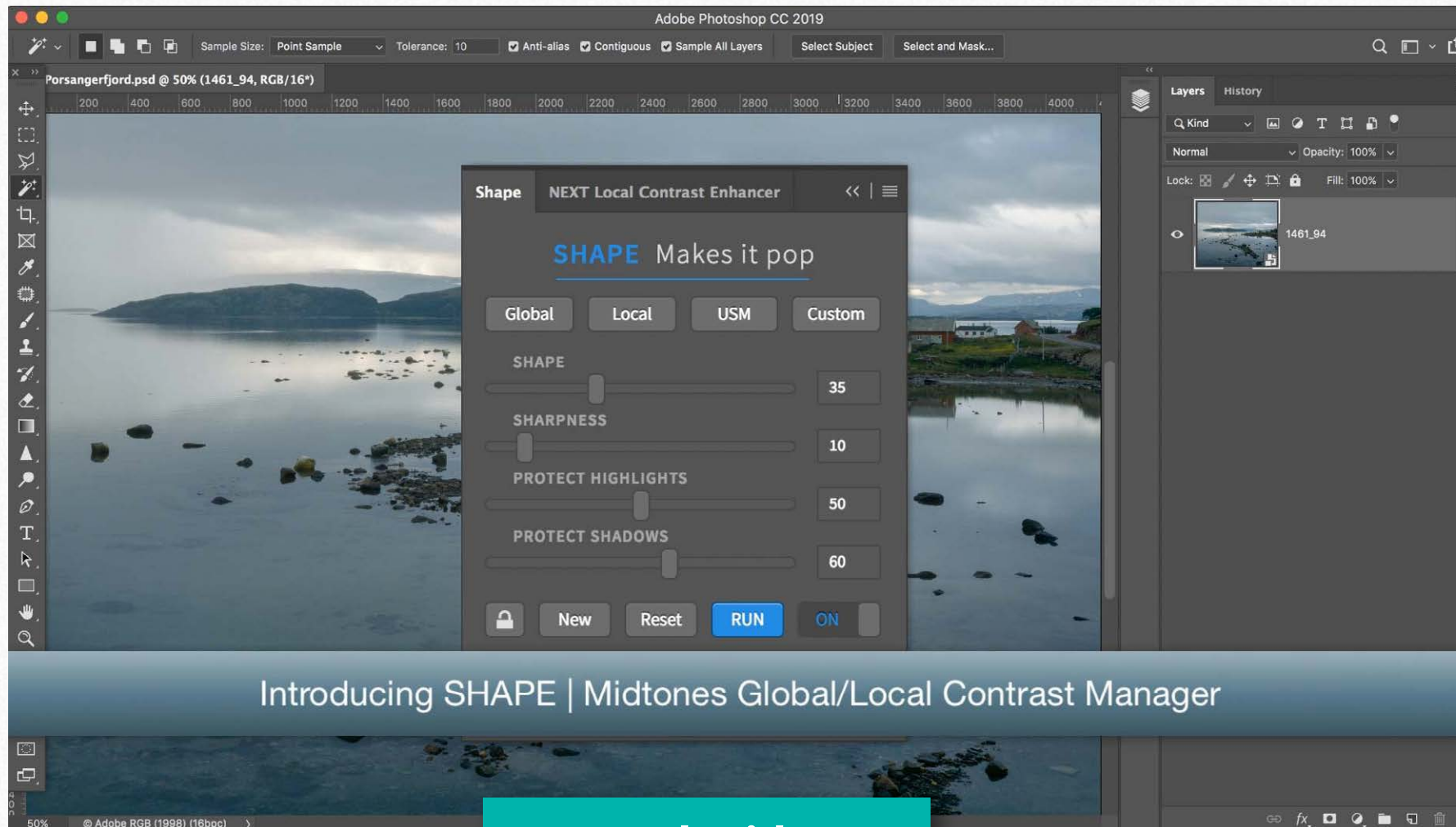
USM Preset

The USM button uses a USM dedicated setting for mid-tones sharpening, excluding USM, where most of the artifacts are usually created.

New layer naming

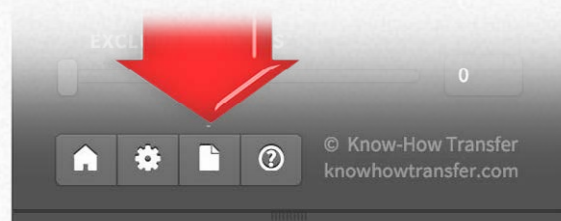
Now the layers are named with all the used values, advance options included. The values are grouped to be more understandable.





Introducing SHAPE | Midtones Global/Local Contrast Manager

[Watch Video](#)



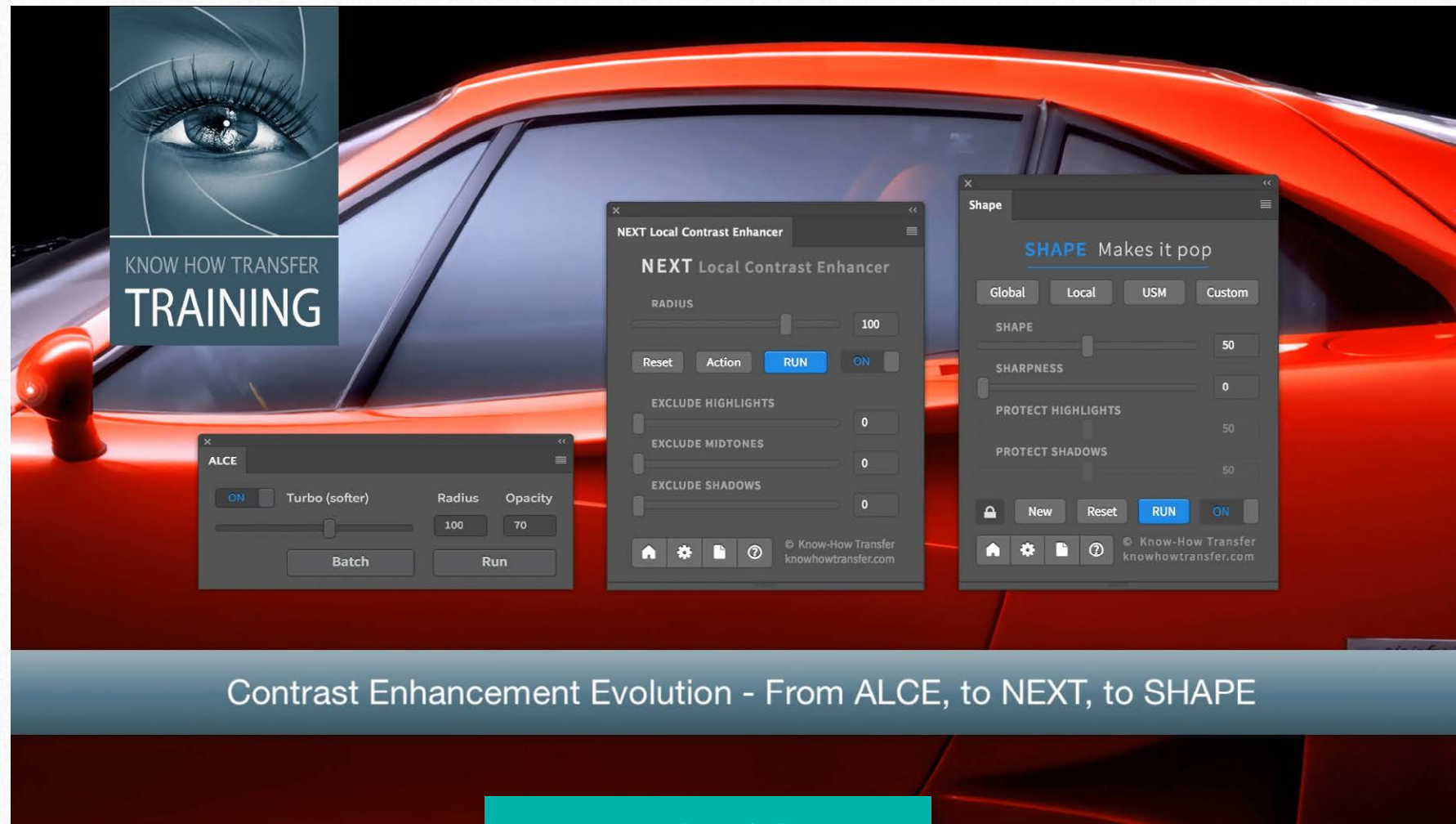
[Access to user manual](#)

You can open this user manual from the book icon in the panel.

[Sample files package](#)

Shape compared to Next

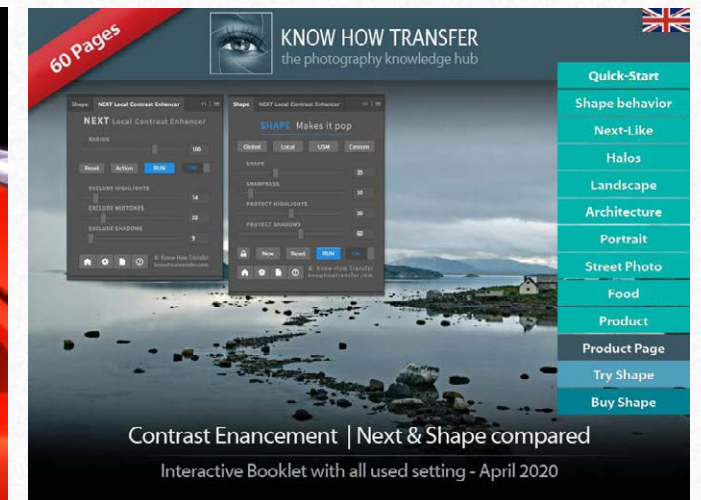
Tutorials



[Watch Video](#)


Watch the video and download the comparison booklet


We made a video and a booklet to compare Shape to Next.
We also prepared a full package of tools to compare the two Enhancers better.
Read more on the next page.



[Interactive booklet](#)

60 Pages

 **KNOW HOW TRANSFER**
the photography knowledge hub



Shape

NEXT Local Contrast Enhancer

<< | ≡

NEXT Local Contrast Enhancer

RADIUS

100

Reset Action RUN ON

EXCLUDE HIGHLIGHTS

14

EXCLUDE MIDTONES

22

EXCLUDE SHADOWS

9

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Shape

NEXT Local Contrast Enhancer

<< | ≡

SHAPE Makes it pop

Global Local USM Custom

SHAPE

35

SHARPNESS

10

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

50

PROTECT SHADOWS

60

New Reset RUN ON


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Quick-Start

Shape behavior

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Try Shape

Buy Shape

Contrast Enhancement | Next & Shape compared

Interactive Booklet with all used setting - April 2020

Download the booklet

Try Shape yourself

A book where Shape and Next are compared with different subjects, including all the used settings.

Download the sample files package containing most of the files used and the trial version of Shape to try yourself. Find links below.

[Shape Trial](#)[Sample files package](#)[Interactive booklet](#)

Install Shape

Install

The install files are downloadable from the download email links or logging' in your ["My Account"](#) page

You can download the dedicated installer or the folder documentation that contains the user manuals in more languages and extra contents as actions or test files.

Download 1: Shape for MAC

Download 2: Shape for WIN

Download 3: Documentation

Double click or right click to install

MAC users that have the security preference tab checked on "Allow apps downloaded from "Mac Apps Store" will receive an alert that this app has not been downloaded from Apple Mac Store. OK, and proceed to install.

WIN users will be asked "Do you want to allow this app from an unknown publisher to make changes to your PC?"
OK, and proceed to install.

Double click or right click to uninstall

Same procedure using the "Uninstall app" button



Additional step for pre-CC 2014 users

We mean the first version of. CC, released in 2013.
2014 and later are OK.

[To complete the installation, please go to FAQ page >](#)

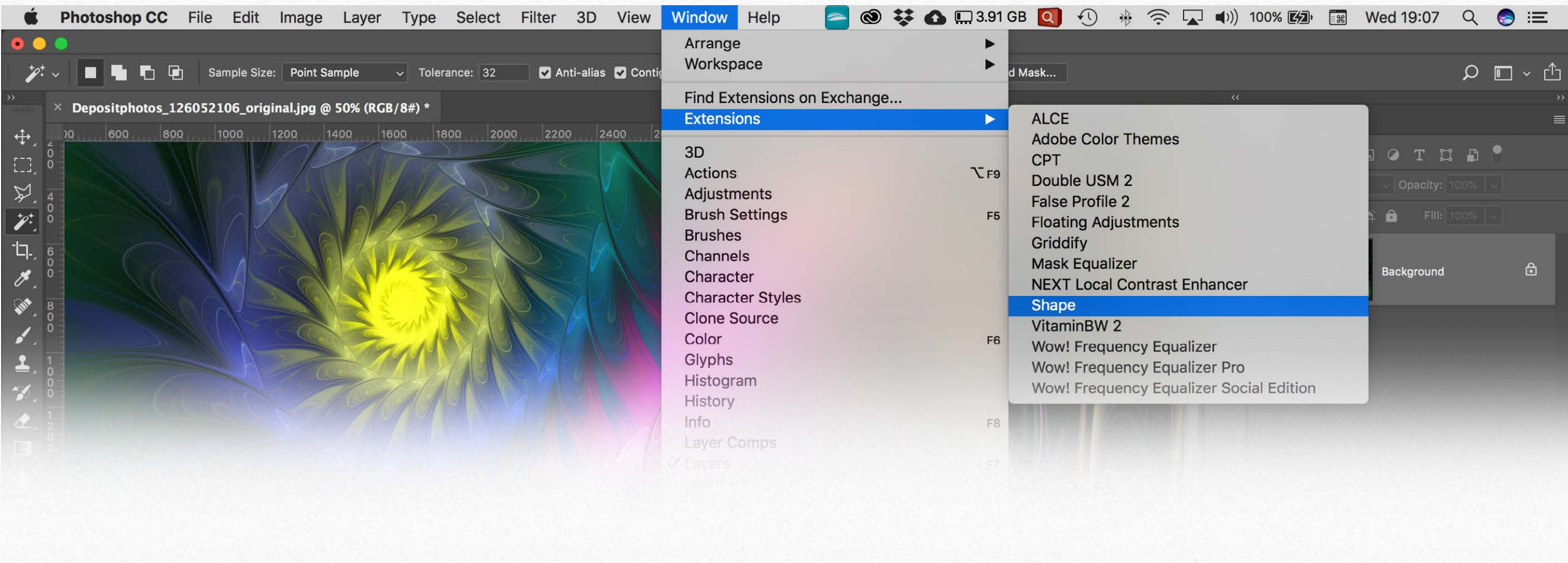
Compatibility

Photoshop CC and above
MAC OSX 10.7 Lion and above
WIN 10 and above (64bit only)

Install Tutorial

Open Shape

Open Shape



Open Shape

Photoshop/Window/Extension/Shape

Do NOT open Shape

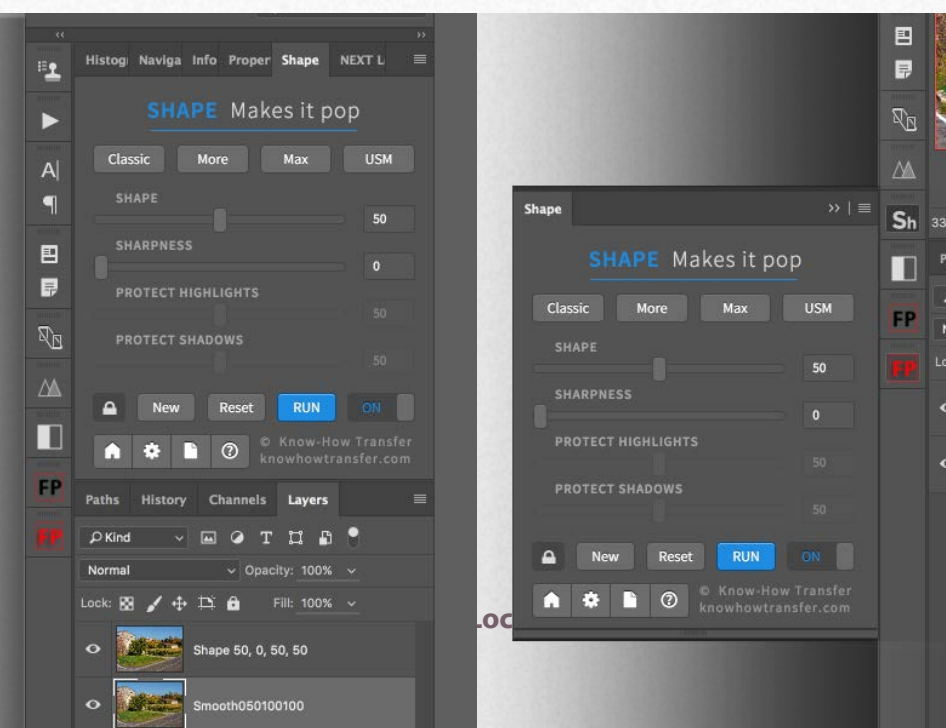
Photoshop/Filter/Know-How Transfer/Shape
This menu item is only for internal use.

Where to place the panel

1. Drag the panel into the palette area.
You will always have it open with the latest settings.
2. Dock/undock it into the icons bar.
3. Keep it floating.



*The panel
in icon mode.*



The Shape Panel

The Panel

Compact and extended mode

Here the panel in the extended mode. It can be compacted if you don't use the protect sliders manually.

Shape

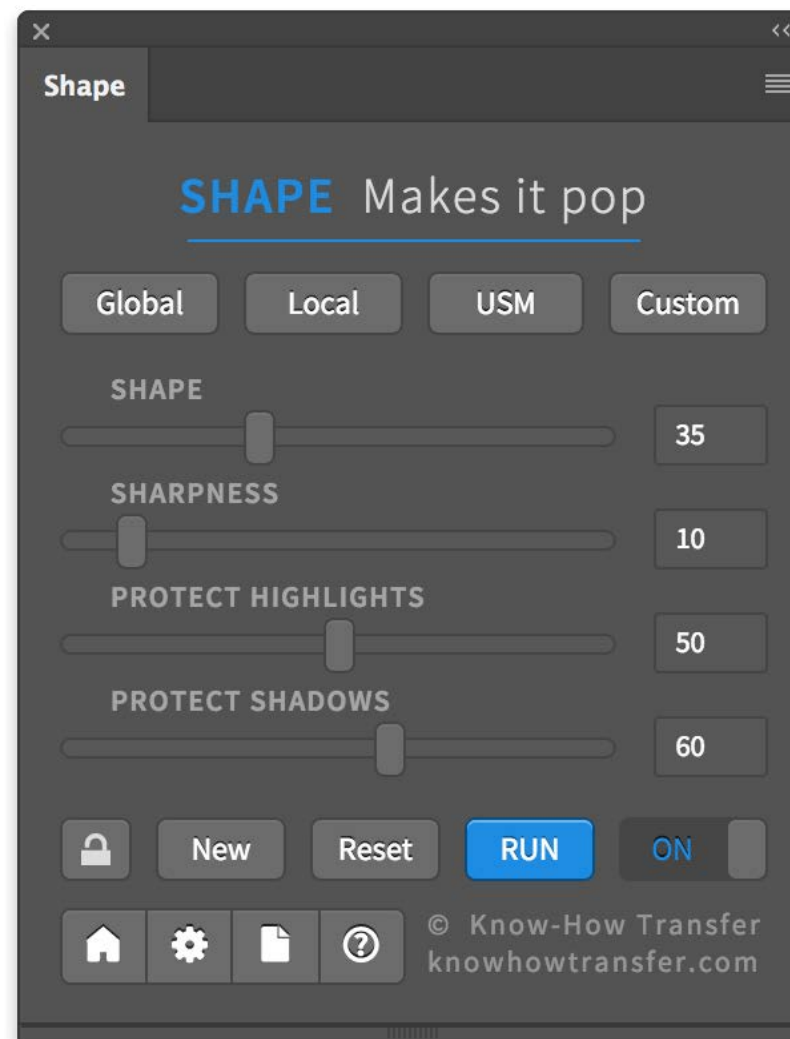
The core function of Shape. Ranging from 1 to 100 it sets the amount of Shape that is a mix of contrast and local contrast. The default value is 50.

Sharpness

Ranging from 1 to 100 it Increases sharpness. It's independent of the Shape slider.

Protect Highlights and Shadows

The sliders progressively reduce the contrast effect on highlights and shadows. By default, the two sliders are linked to Shape, so if you set 40 on Shape, they automatically go to 40. Adjust them independently by clicking on the padlock button.



Use this small handle
to expand or contract the panel

Presets

Global: Global contrast prevalent
Local: Local contrast prevalent
USM: Sharpness only, color boost set to 0
Custom: customizable in the preferences

Padlock

Grey: the Protect Highlights and Shadows work independently from the Shape slider. Black: they are linked to the Shape slider with same values.

New

By clicking it and changing values, a new version of the selected layer is created on a separate layer.

RUN

Used ONLY to apply Shape's default the first time or re-applies the current setting to another image or layer.

Reset - ON/OFF

Reset the values to default.
ON/OFF Compare the before/after version.

Footer Buttons

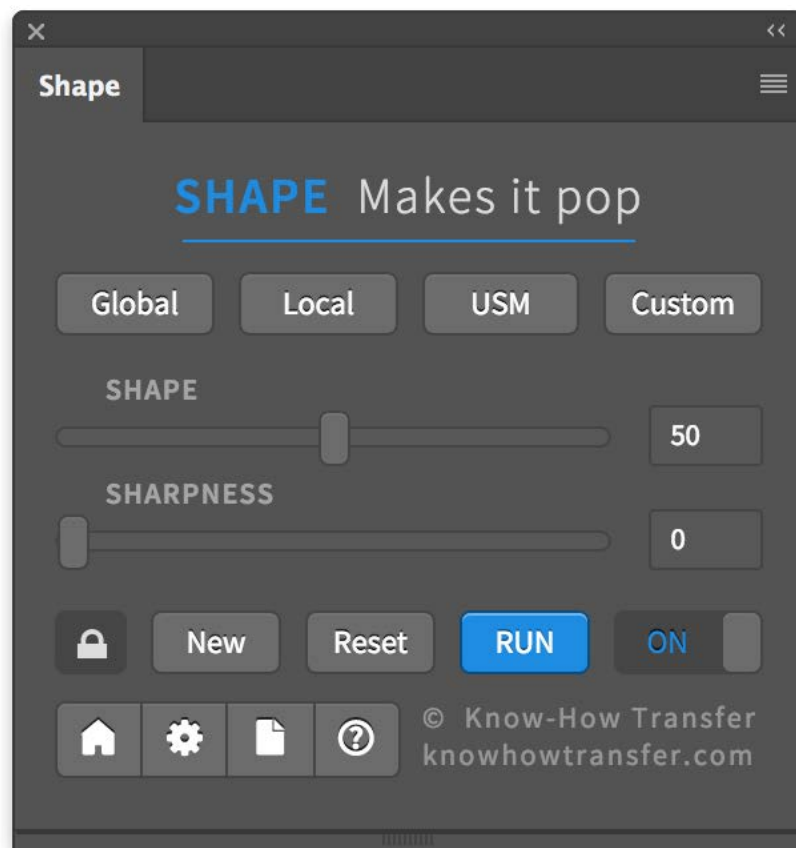
1. Links to Shape page.
2. Opens the preferences tab.
3. Opens the user manual.
4. Info on version release

Panel modes

The Panel

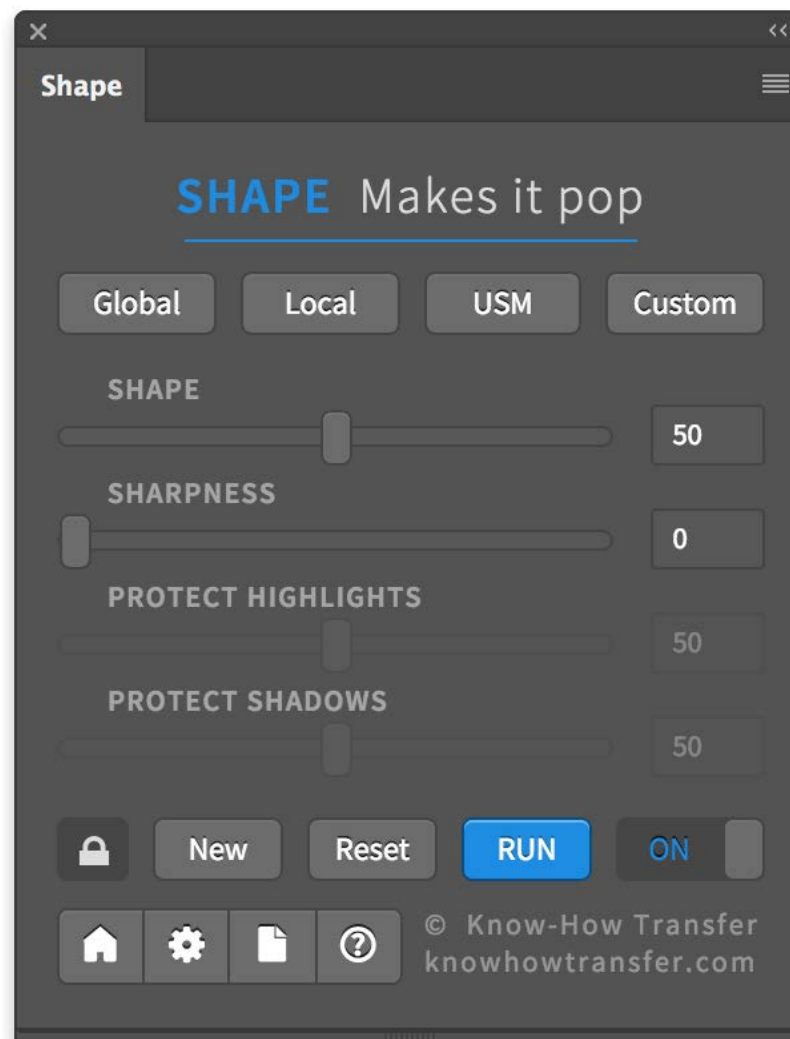
Here below how the panel looks in different modes

Compact mode. The Shape slider is linked to Protect Highlight and Shadows sliders (not visible in compact mode..
Shape = 50, Protect = 50.



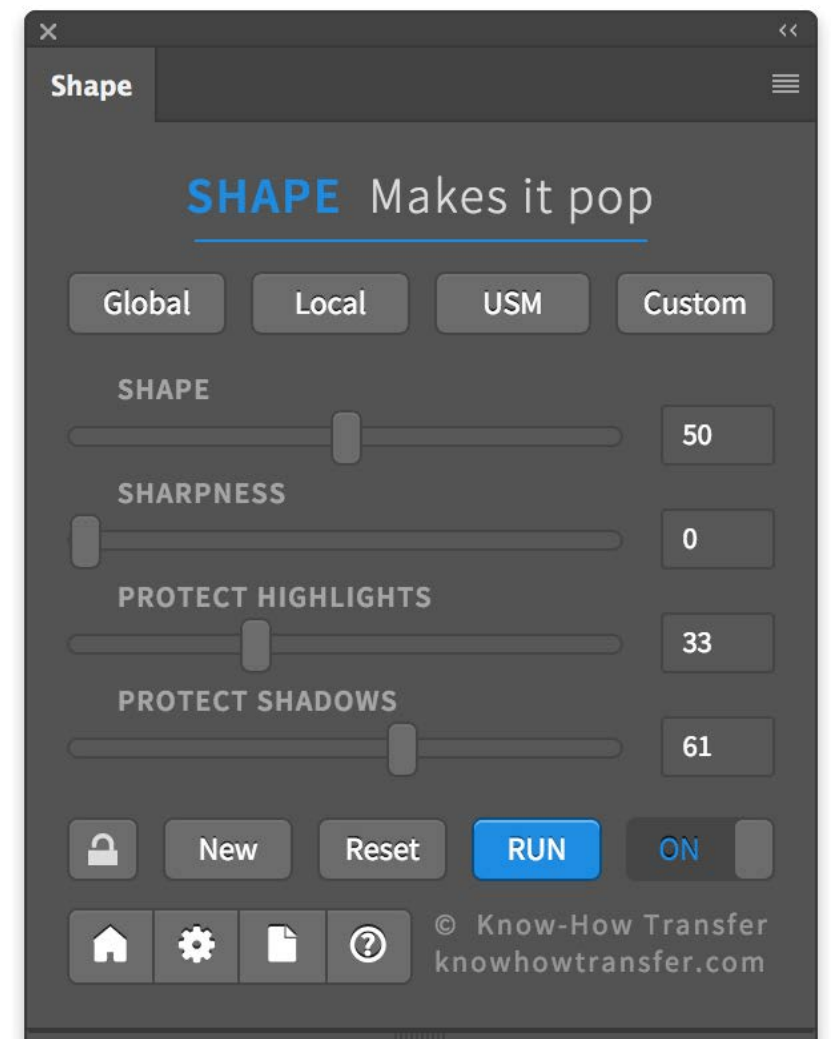
Use this small handle
to expand or contract the panel

Extended mode. Works as in compact mode but revealing the Protect sliders.
The Lock is closed and black.
The sliders are not clickable.



Black closed padlock.
Protect sliders linked to Shape
and not editable.

Fully editable mode. By clicking the Lock button, the Protect sliders will be editable independently by the Shape slider values.



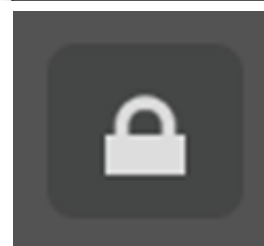
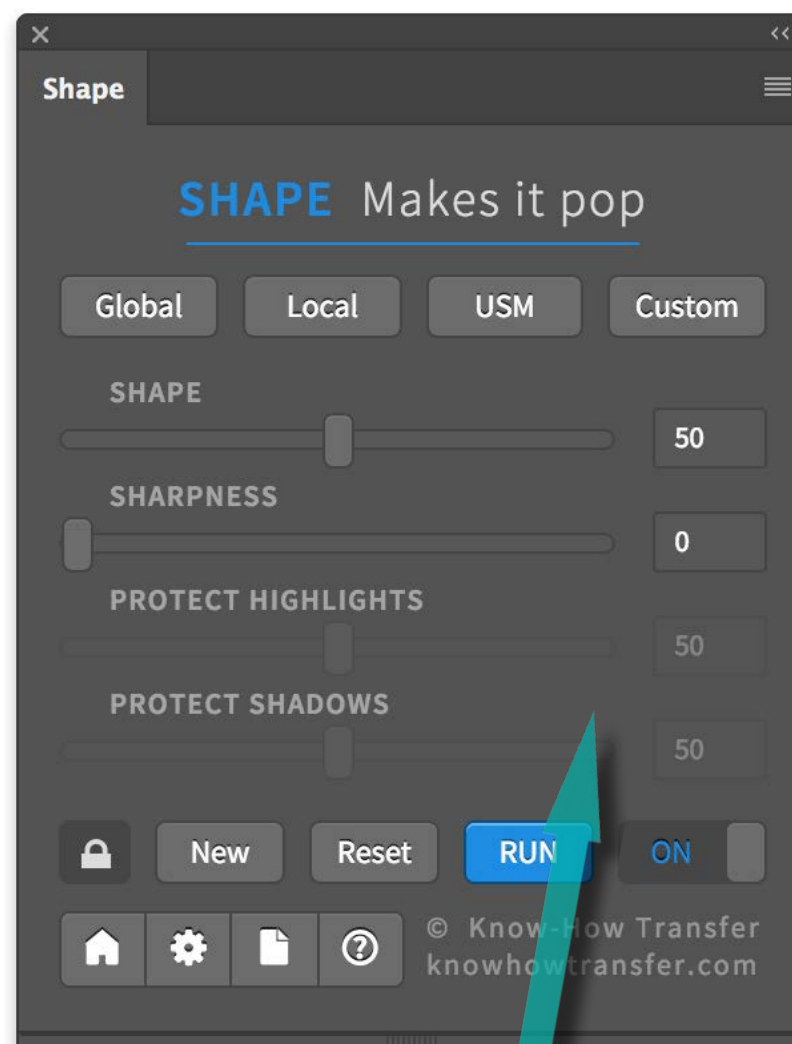
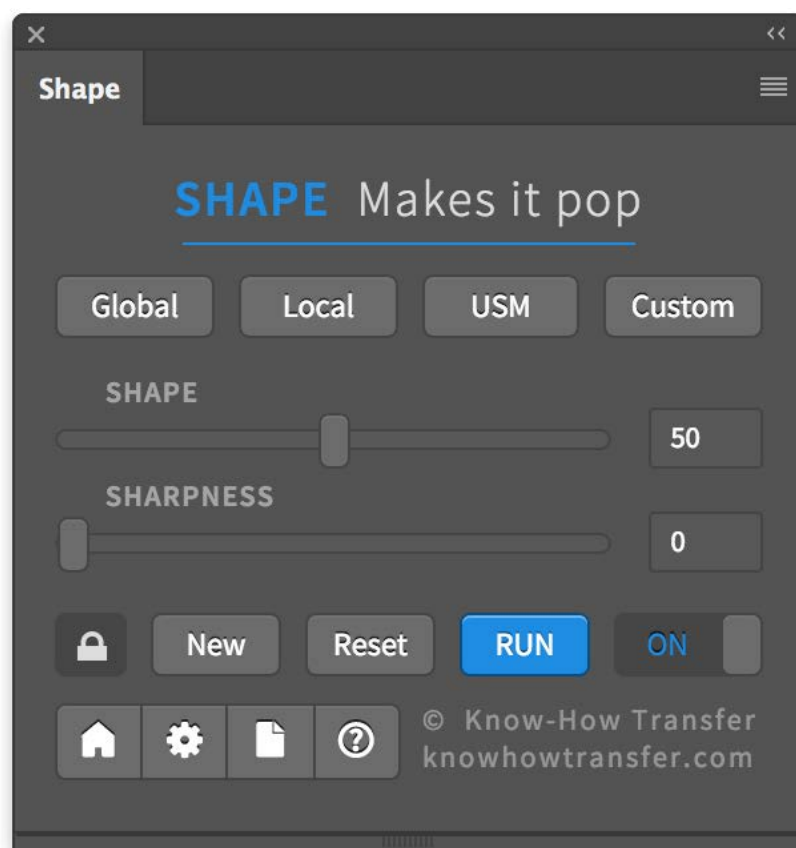
Grey open padlock.
Protect sliders are
independently editable.

Protect Highlight and Shadows behavior

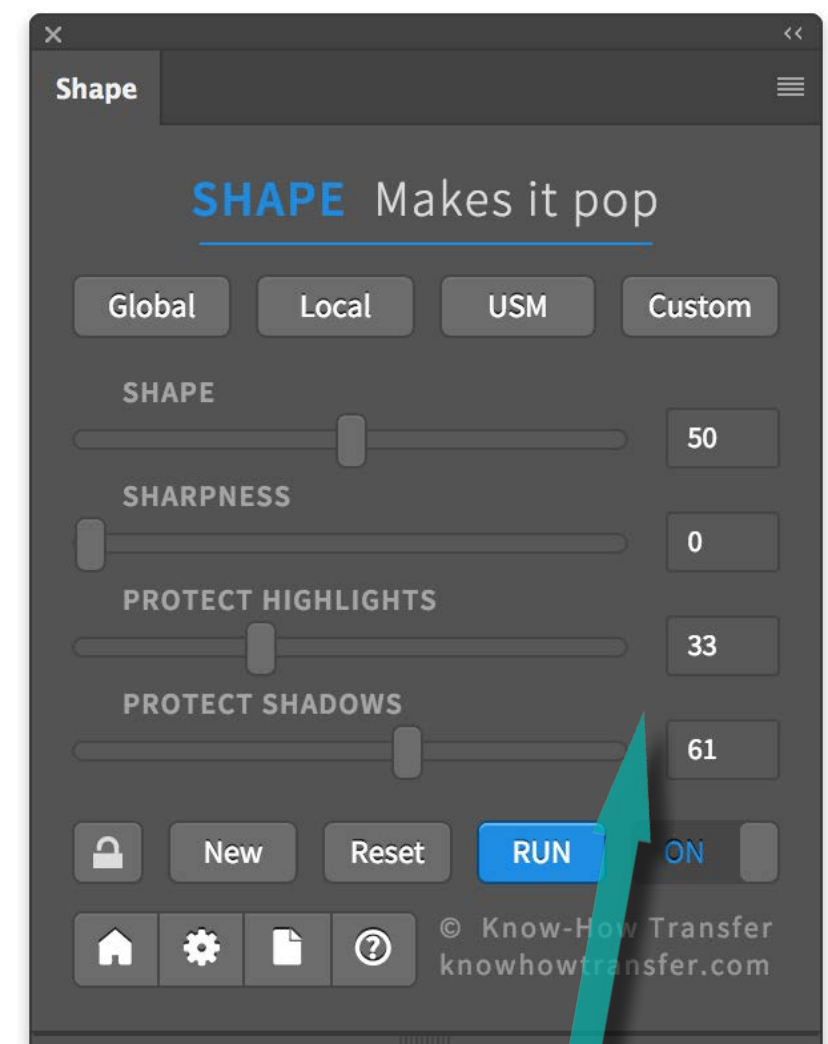
The Panel

The Protect sliders progressively reduce the contrast effect on highlights and shadows. By default, the two values are linked to Shape, so if you set 40 on Shape, both them automatically set to 40. The two protection layers are hidden in compact mode. If you expand the panel, they are visible with their values shown in grey, but you cannot change them. To unlock and tweak them independently, click on the padlock button.

The Sharpness slider is independent.



*Padlock black and closed.
Grey numbers.
Sliders: not editable.*



*Padlock grey and open.
White numbers.
Sliders: editable.*



Starting from this release presets also embed Color Mode, Color Boost and Frequency values.

Global

(35, 10) P(50, 60) F(3, 50, 200) CB12
Global contrast prevalent. Great natural photographic contrast.

Local

(35, 10) P(20, 20) F(3, 15, 60) CB12
Local contrast prevalent. Smaller detail enhancement. Less contrast.

USM

0, 50) P(40, 40) F(5, 30, 120) CB0
Exclusive mid-tones sharpening setting with Saturation set to 0.

Custom

Somewhere between Global and Local. All parameters are customizable in the preferences.

SHAPE Makes it pop

GlobalLocalUSMCustom

SHAPE

35

SHARPNESS

10

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

50

PROTECT SHADOWS

60

Color mode

RGB

Luminosity (faster)

Color boost:12

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius):3

Mid-Frequency (mid radius):50

Low-Frequency (high radius):200

SHAPE Makes it pop

GlobalLocalUSMCustom

SHAPE

35

SHARPNESS

10

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

20

PROTECT SHADOWS

20

Color mode

RGB

Luminosity (faster)

Color boost:12

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius):3

Mid-Frequency (mid radius):15

Low-Frequency (high radius):60

SHAPE Makes it pop

GlobalLocalUSMCustom

SHAPE

0

SHARPNESS

50

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

40

PROTECT SHADOWS

40

Color mode

RGB

Luminosity (faster)

Color boost:0

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius):5

Mid-Frequency (mid radius):30

Low-Frequency (high radius):120

SHAPE Makes it pop

GlobalLocalUSMCustom

SHAPE

35

SHARPNESS

10

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

50

PROTECT SHADOWS

60

Custom Preset

Shape:35

Sharpness:10

Highlights:50

Shadows:60

High-Frequency (low radius):3

Mid-Frequency (mid radius):30

Low-Frequency (high radius):100

RGB

Luminosity (faster)

Color boost:10

Preferences - General settings

Preferences

Live Preview to manual mode

Live View box checked: Shape is applied after any slider change. Let's suppose that you set "Shape," "Sharpness," "Protect Highlights," and "Protect Shadows," Shape will be applied four times. It's useful as it shows the work in progress after any single change.

Live view box unchecked: set any slider and then click on "RUN" to get the effect. It's useful if you have a slower CPU, a huge file, or you are changing many sliders in one go. Once done, save or "Reset to default."

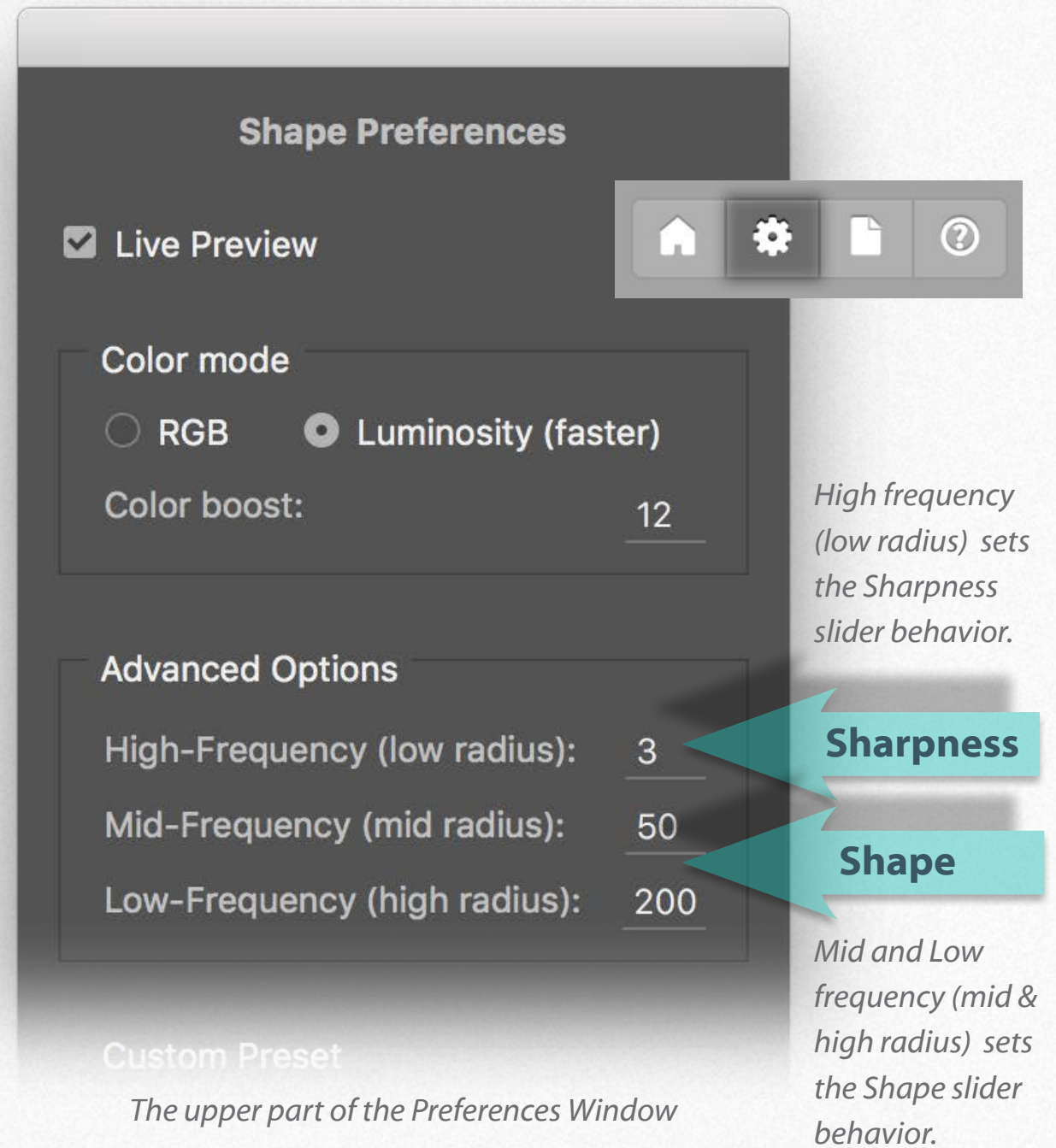
Color mode

Color Accuracy: works using the three RGB channels, try is with landscape comparing its result with the luminosity one.

Luminosity: an excellent balance of quality and performance, works using the LAB luminosity channel. It's faster and chromatically flexible thanks to the customizable Color boost option. A higher value adds saturation. It's the best choice for black & white files.

Advanced Options. Customize radius decomposing value

Shape, under the hood, decomposes your image in three frequency layers. You can customize the default values: radius 2.5 (high), 64 (mid), 256 (low). "High": the default is 2.5. Raise the value to add aggressivity to the USM. "Mid": just keep an intermediate value between High and Low. "Low": it's the core parameter and affects the overall shape effect. In general higher values improve the shape and the color, lower values preserve shadow and highlights. To understand how it works, try 512 and 64.

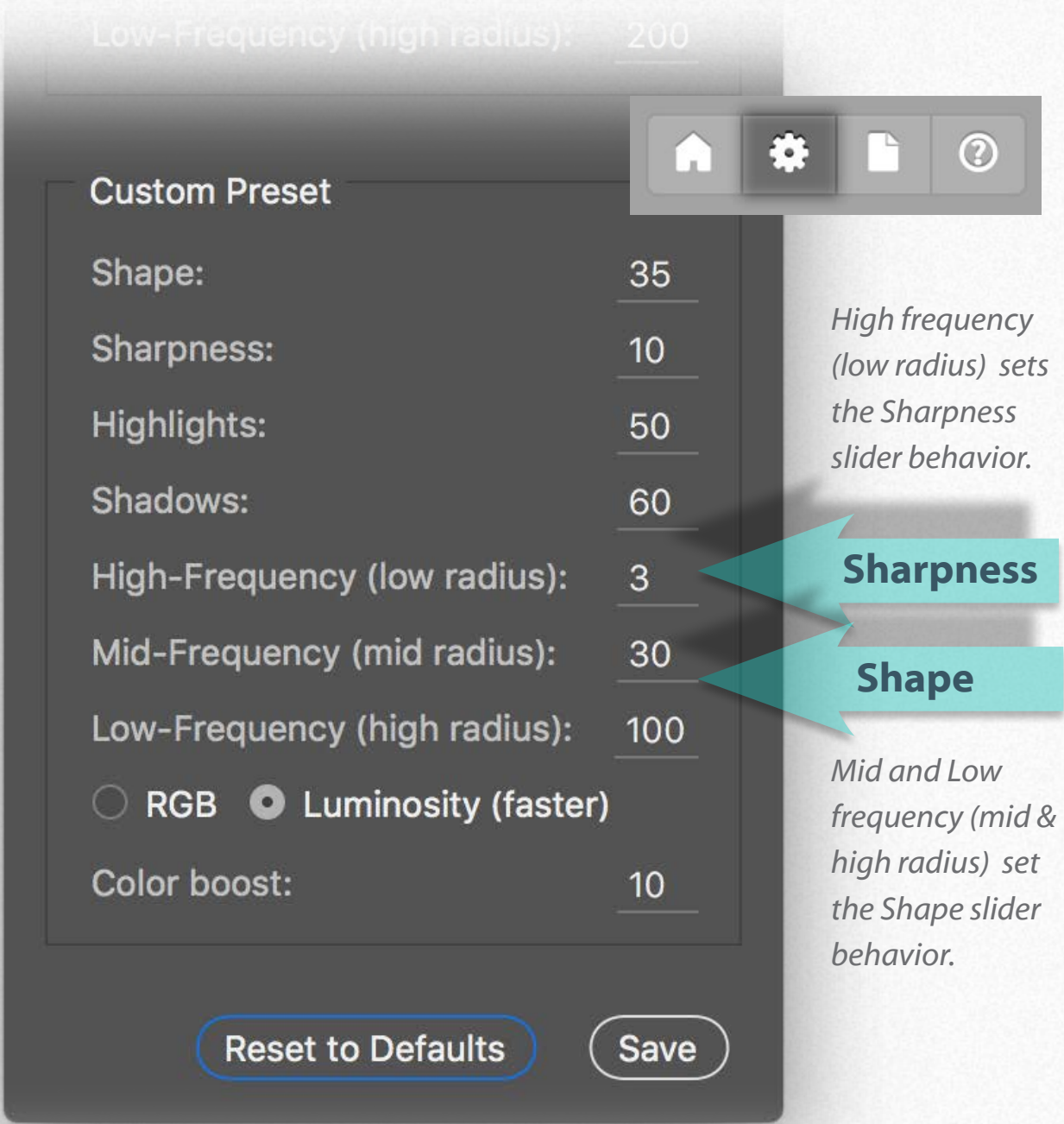


Customize your Shape Video

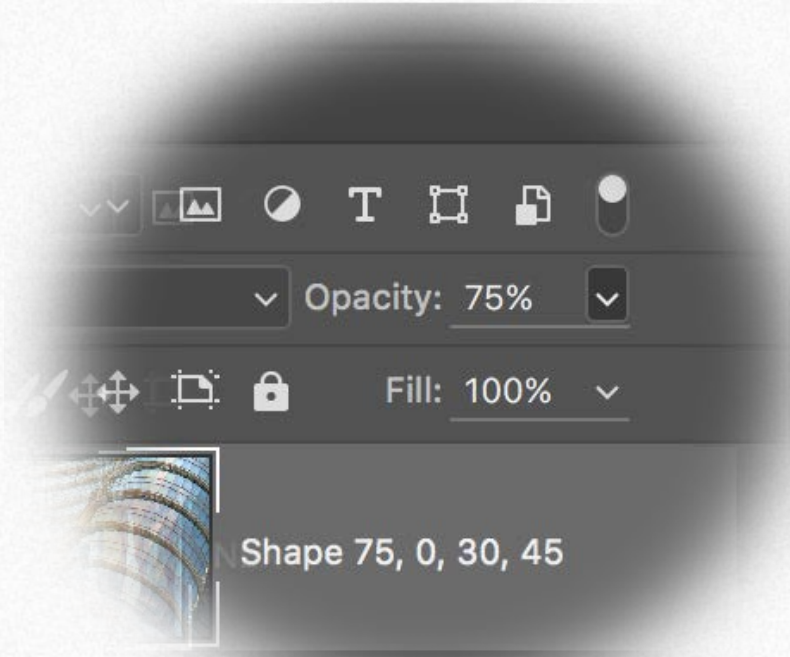
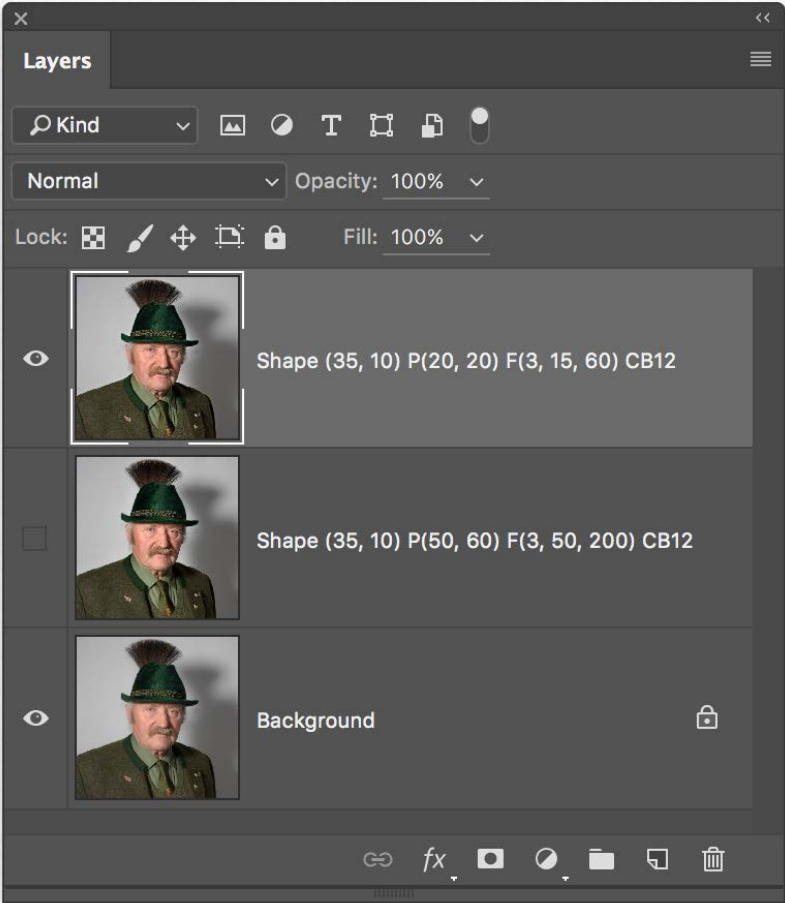
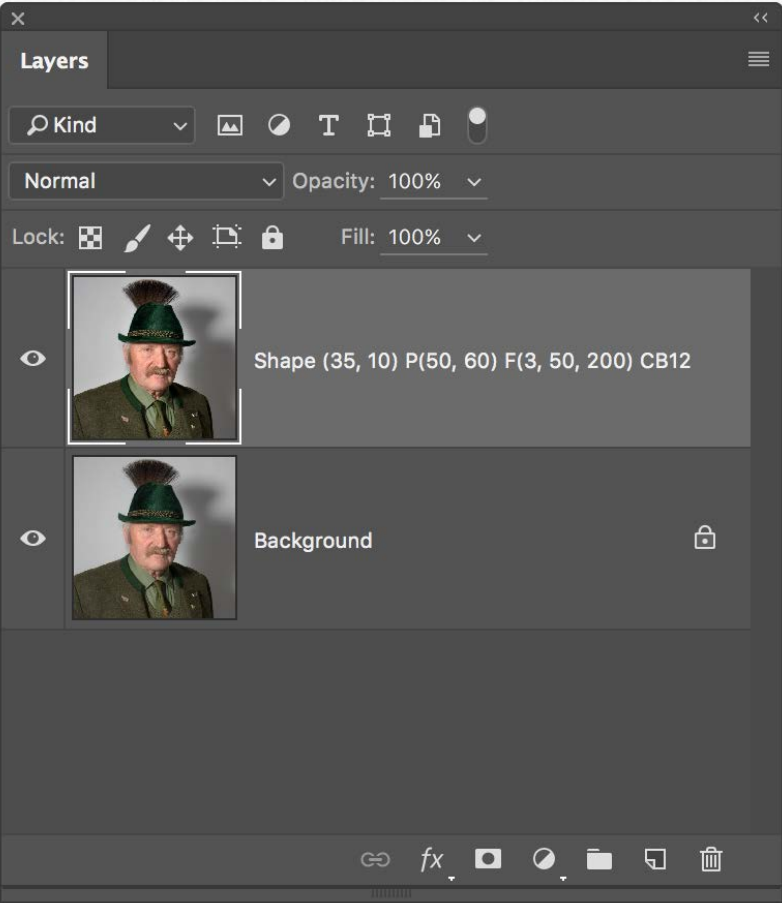
Custom preset customization

The user can now customize the “Custom” button.
Not only Shape, Sharpness, Highlights and Shadows Protect, but also Color Mode, Color Boost, and Frequency value.
Just input your parameters and Save

Reset to Defaults WILL NOT RESET CUSTOM PRESET.



The lower part of the Preferences Window



Shape goes into a new layer

By default, Shape applies its effect on a duplicate layer named with the used values. In this case: Shape 50, 0, 50, 50
If you change any slider, the new version will replace the previous one.

Get and compare versions

To compare versions get a first one, then click on the “NEW” button and get the next version.

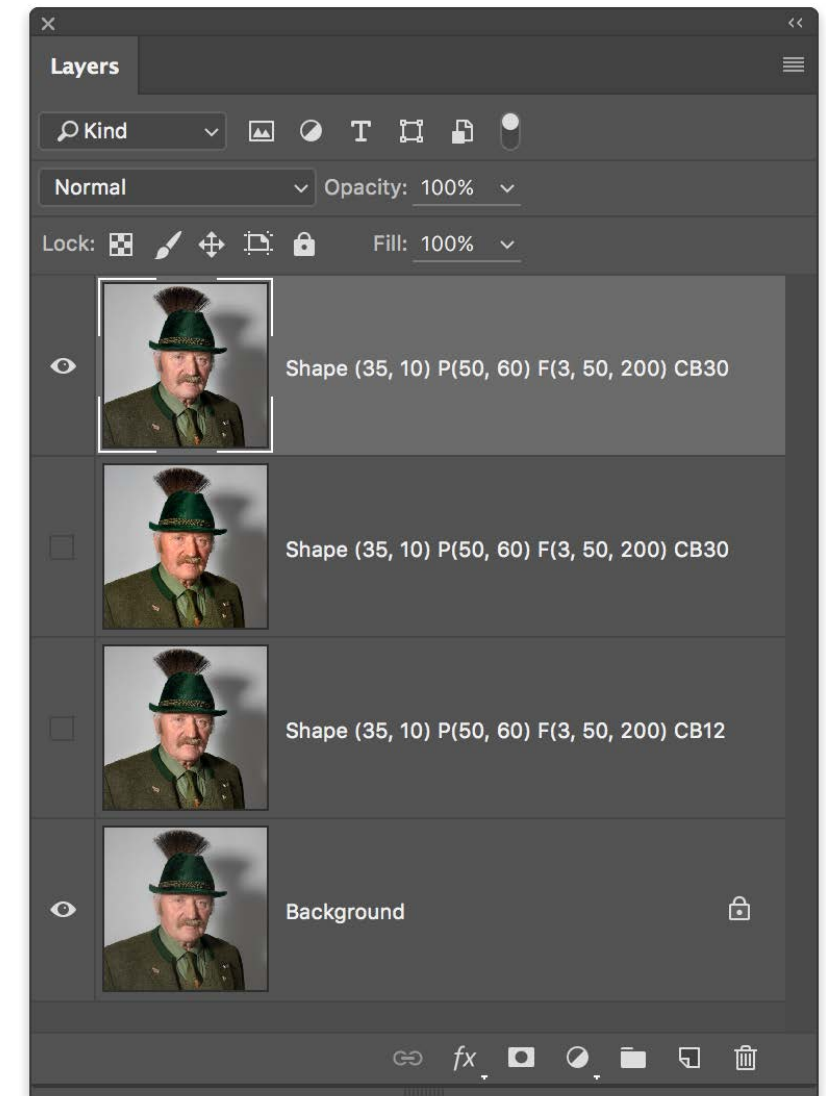
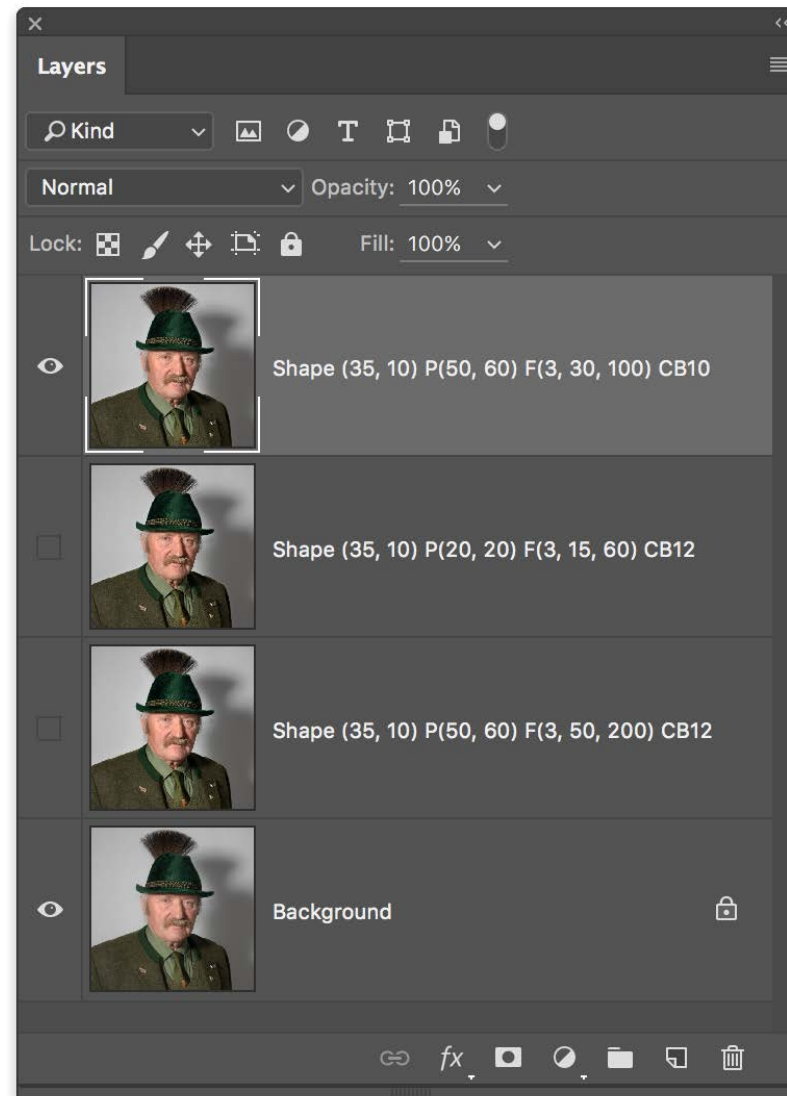
Use opacity to tweak the contrast

The Shape layers are 100% opacity. This will allow you to reduce the enhancing effect by reducing the opacity.



Version layers using the “New” button

Shape with Layers



“New” version button

By clicking on the “New” button, the layer with the last version of Shape will be deactivated, and a new version will be created on top.

Compare versions or Presets

You can try different manual combinations or compare the Presets for a quick start.

Compare Color Modes and CB

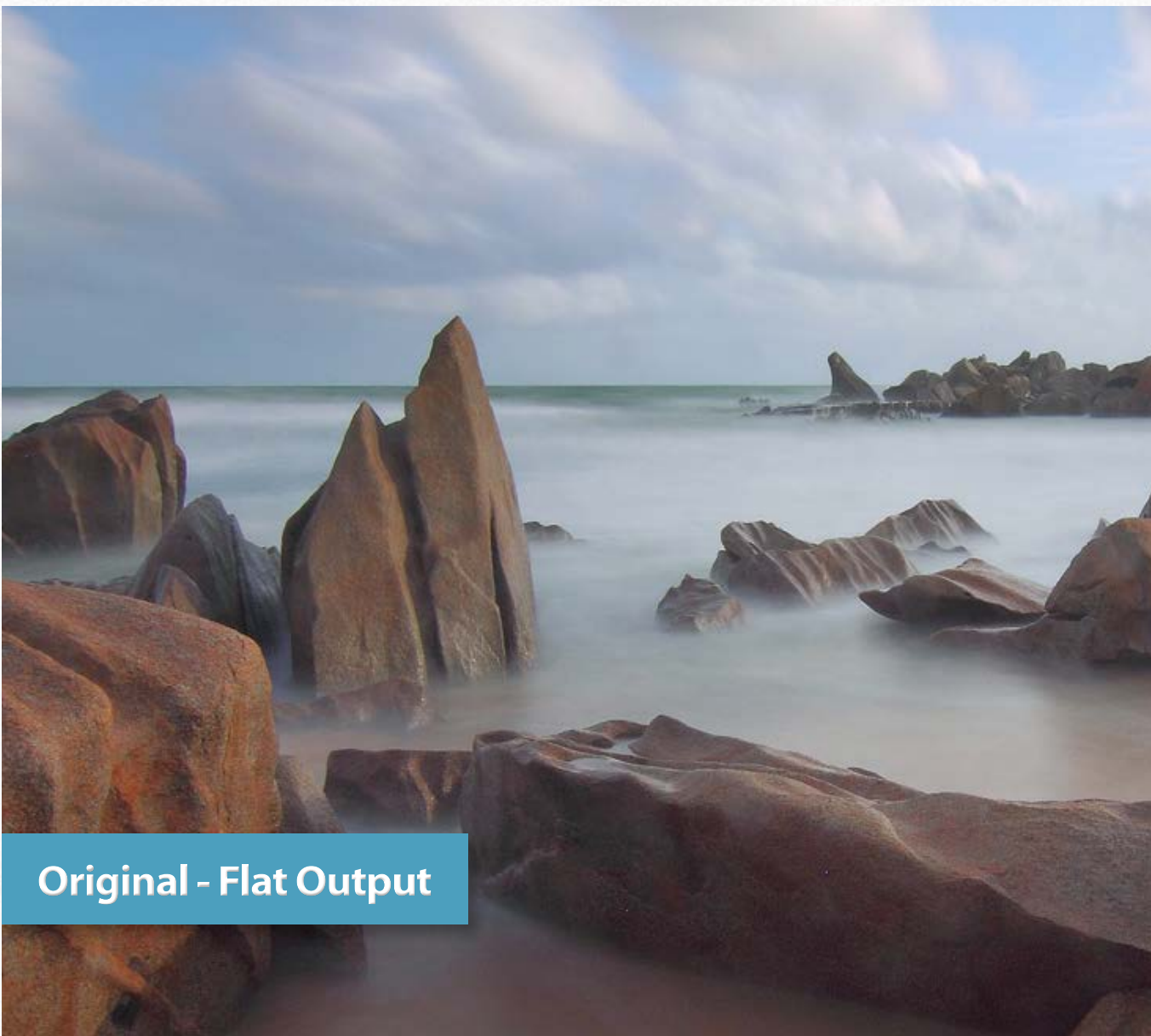
Compare the two Color Modes, Luminosity or RGB and different versions adjusting the Color Boost (saturation) value.

How Shape “Makes it Pop”

How it works

Shape through its internal 32bit frequency decomposing creates a unique kind of effect by mixing contrast and local contrast keeping the best of the two worlds. The shape effect focuses on mid-tones, thanks to an internal masking tool protecting highlights and shadows, without halos or posterization. Shape adds contrast and sharpness without losing saturation, with a pleasant and natural look.

To start, we recommend to output from your camera, Camera Raw, or Lightroom, a flat-file. Choose the flat or linear mode as camera style. Avoid forcing the colors, adding USM or clarity. Shape will do it better.



Original - Flat Output



Shape 60. 25. 60. 60

Understanding Shape behavior - Start from a Preset

How it works

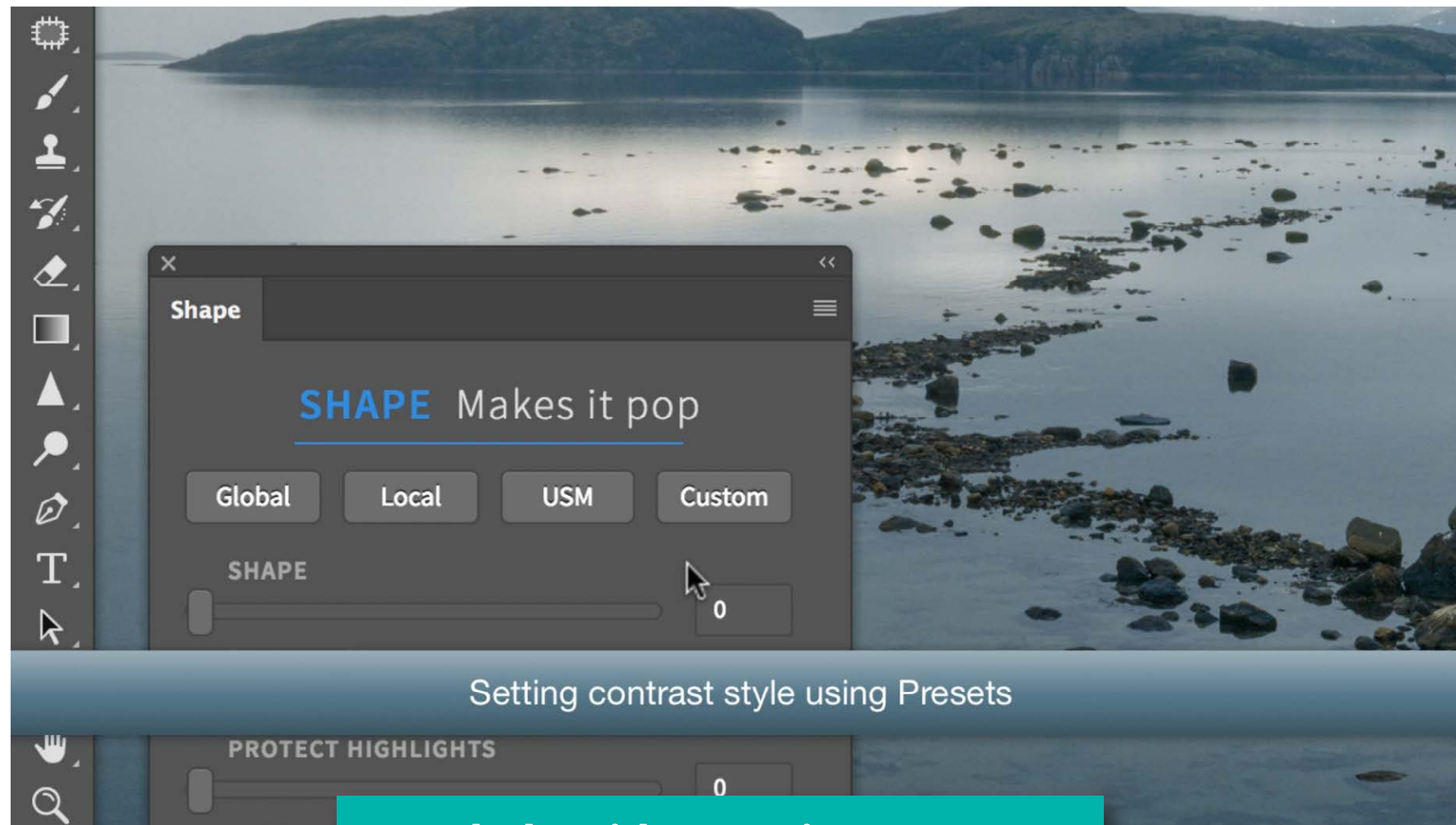
SHAPE separately controls the **Kind** and the **Amount** of Contrast Enhancement.

The **Kind** is controlled by the presets Global, Local, USM, and Custom. The **Amount** is controlled by the Shape and Sharpness sliders.

The kind of contrast given by the presets varies because they use a different frequency range. [Watch the video at min. 3.56](#)

To understand in practice what it means, open one of your standard files and apply “Global,” then using the button “NEW” to create a new version using “Local.” Last, create a third version using “Custom” that, by default, is somewhere between “Global” and “Local.”

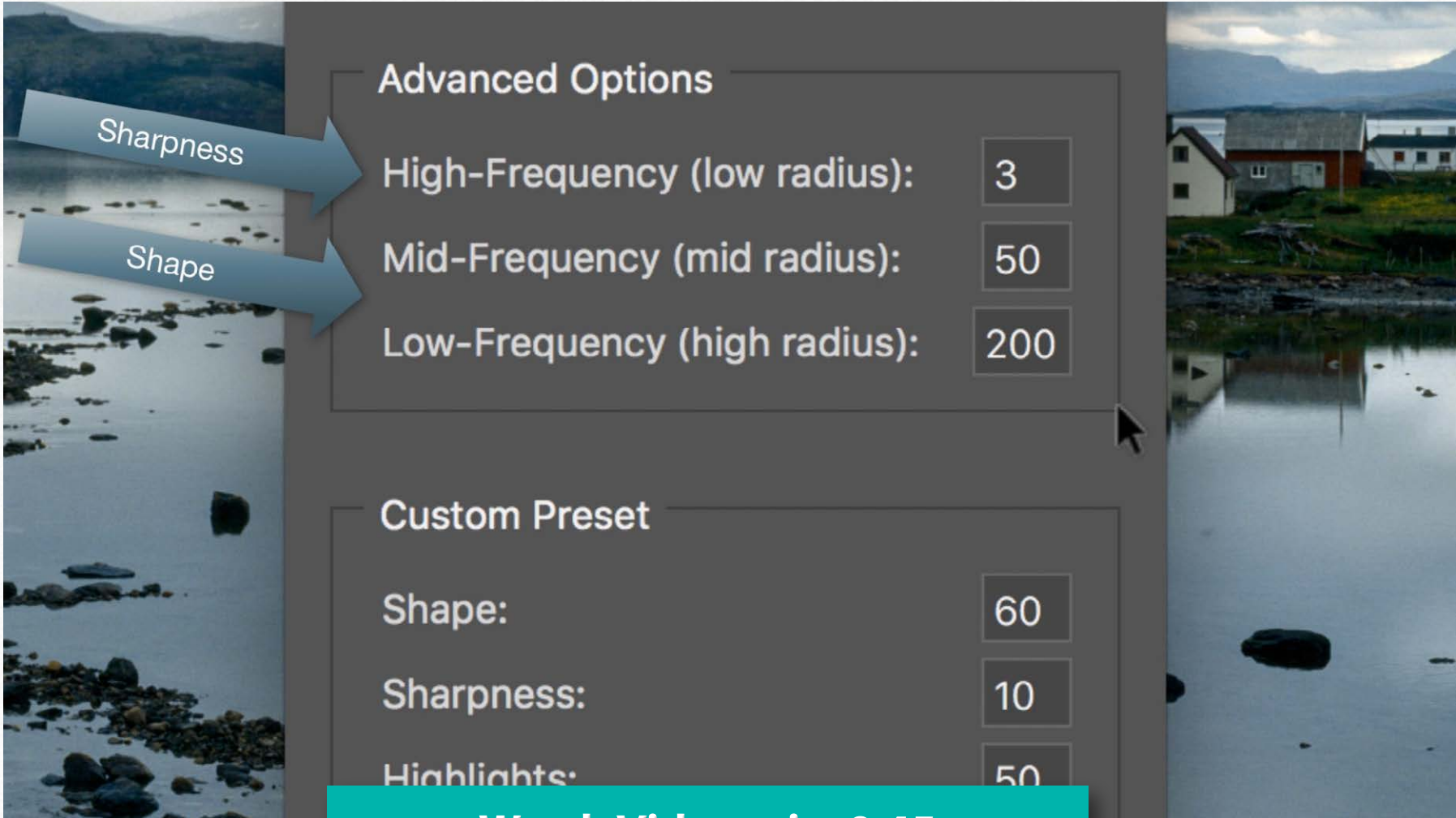
Compare the three versions. Trash the versions, and apply again the preset you liked more. Now you can tweak the sliders that will work in the frequency range of the chosen preset. [Watch the video at min. 6.33](#)



Watch the video at min. 3.56 / 6.33

Understanding Shape behavior - Start from scratch

SHAPE separately controls the **Kind** and the **Amount** of Contrast Enhancement. The **Amount** is controlled by the “Shape” and “Sharpness” sliders. The Kind, by default, is set to “Global”. The contrast looks similar to Photoshop Curves but focused on the mid-tones. The **Kind** of Contrast can be modified by changing the “Advanced Options” tab in preferences. High-Frequency controls the Sharpness behavior, Mid and Low Frequency control the Shape behavior. Higher High-Frequency numbers deliver a result progressively similar to HiRaLoam. Lower Mid and Low-Frequency number deliver a progressively **Local Contrast Behavior**. See samples of settings on the right. **This workflow is decribed in the video from min 0.45.**



Watch Video min. 0.45

How it works

*Global, default. Standard contrast.
Extremely natural photographic look.*

Advanced Options	
High-Frequency (low radius):	3
Mid-Frequency (mid radius):	50
Low-Frequency (high radius):	200

*Global/Local Mix. A perfect balance of
Global and Contrast look.*

Advanced Options	
High-Frequency (low radius):	3
Mid-Frequency (mid radius):	30
Low-Frequency (high radius):	100

*Local. Medium-low contrast.
Enhancement of smaller details.*

Advanced Options	
High-Frequency (low radius):	3
Mid-Frequency (mid radius):	15
Low-Frequency (high radius):	60

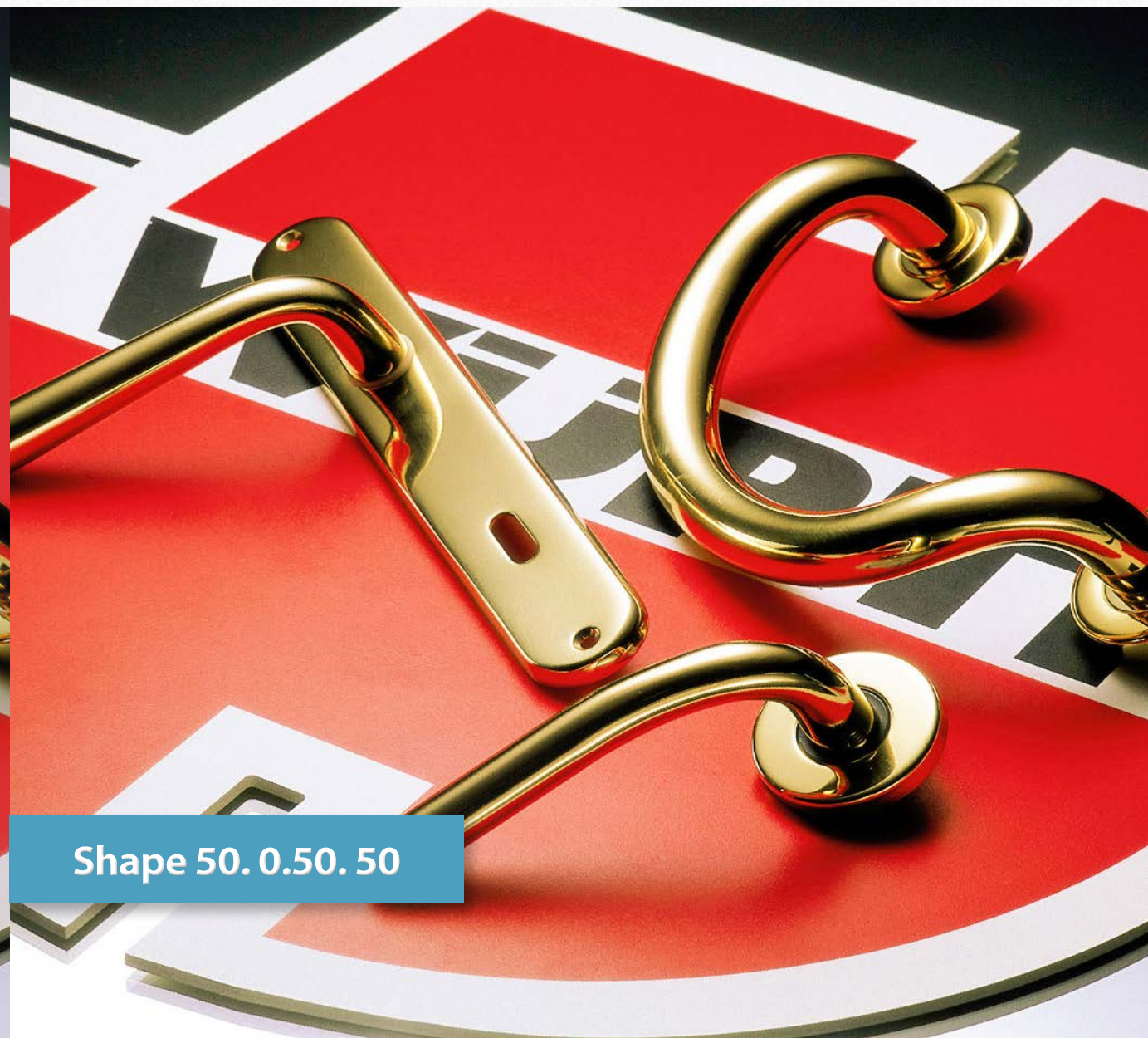
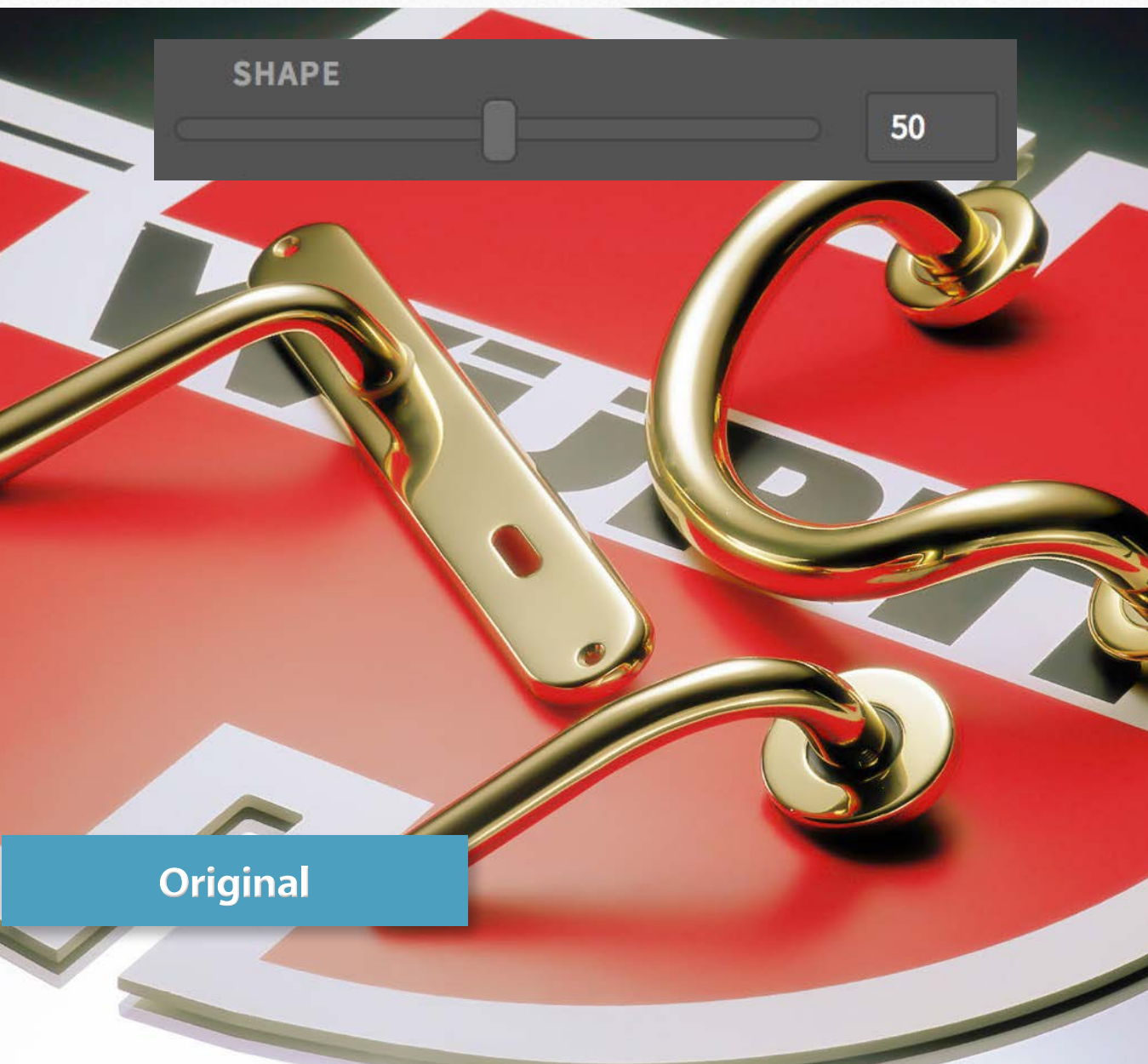
*Extremely Local. Less contrast
Extreme enhancement of details.*

Advanced Options	
High-Frequency (low radius):	2
Mid-Frequency (mid radius):	4
Low-Frequency (high radius):	16

Adjusting the contrast

How it works

1. Adjust the “Shape” slider starting from the default setting. Try different values. The “Protect Highlight” and “Protect Shadows” will automatically set accordingly.
2. By unlocking the locker button and adjust the “Protect Highlights” and “Protect Shadows” independently. You can also get different versions to compare using the button “New.”



Adding sharpness

How it works

Shape allows you to control the **sharpening AMOUNT** by adjusting the “SHARPNESS” slider. By default, it’s set to zero, and it’s independent. You can control the **sharpening MODE** by adjusting the High-Frequency (low radius) value in the preferences tab. [Watch how it works here](#)

With a lower radius (e.i 1) you will get a thinner USM, a higher one, (e.i 5) will deliver a more aggressive sharpening.

Shape can also be used as a sharpener only that you can exclude in shadows and highlights where USM creates most of the artifacts. In this case, in the preferences tab, set the Color Boost option to 0.



Controlling highlight and shadows

How it works

In general, the auto-setting of the protect sliders will work fine. If you are not satisfied, unlock the padlock button and tweak the Protect sliders independently.

Due to the limits of this pdf, the differences are not so evident as in the real files. We recommend trying with your photos. If you have not purchased Shape yet, please [download a trial version here](#).



☐ RGB

☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost: 12

Luminosity is the default color mode and provides an excellent balance of quality and performance using the Lab L channel. It's faster and chromatically flexible thanks to the customizable Color Boost option. The best choice for black & white files.

RGB works using the three RGB channels, for the best color rendition.



Adjusting the Global/Local contrast balance

How it works

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 64
Low-Frequency (high radius): 256

An exclusive option for Shape is the ability to change the low-frequency radius to get a different kind of contrast. Setting the radius value to 256 or even better, 512, you will obtain a stunning (mostly global) contrast and color enhancement. By reducing the low-frequency radius value to 32/64, you will get a very different kind of (mostly local) contrast that reminds NEXT. Both options have pros and cons.



Low Frequency = 512

Low Frequency = 32

Watch Video min. 3.00

How it works

Original

Shape Global +

Shape Local +

ORIGINAL

×

Shape

≡

SHAPE Makes it pop

Global

Local

USM

Custom

SHAPE

35

SHARPNESS

35

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

60

PROTECT SHADOWS

60

🔒

New

Reset

RUN

ON

🏠

⚙️

📄

?

© Know-How Transfer
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Original

Shape Global +

Shape Local +

SHAPE GLOBAL +

Original

Shape Global +

Shape Local +

×

Shape

≡

SHAPE Makes it pop

Global

Local

USM

Custom

SHAPE

45

SHARPNESS

35

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

20

PROTECT SHADOWS

35

🔒

New

Reset

RUN

ON

🏠

⚙️

📄

?

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SHAPE LOCAL +

Shape is halos free

Halos Free

First of all, let's define what we usually mean with "halos." Well, we say "ugly halos." Why!

Many great plugins improve contrast by adding a multitude of micro, small, medium, and large halos.

The same is for sharpening tools.

In general, halos improve the contrast, and we define this category as "positive halos."

In other cases, the halos generate ugly effects that must be corrected. We call them "negative halos."

Shape works in a different way, and 99% of cases without generating halos; in Global and even Local mode.

Easy to fix halos

Sometimes halos can be "easily" fixed with a layer mask. Typically in a blue sky or a flat texture.

Extremely difficult to fix halos

It happens when halos are created in the area when contrast is enhanced, and removing halos, you also remove the enhancement.

EXTERNAL HALOS
FIXABLE IN A LAYER MASK

INTERNAL HALOS
DIFFICULT TO CORRECT

Watch samples in the next 4 pages

Download the Shape vs Next pdf

Halos Free

Original

Shape Global +

Shape Local +

Next 50

ORIGINAL

Halos Free

Original

Shape Global +

Shape Local +

Next 50

×

Shape

≡

SHAPE Makes it pop

Global

Local

USM

Custom

SHAPE

35

SHARPNESS

25

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

25

PROTECT SHADOWS

40

🔒

New

Reset

RUN

ON

⏻

🏠

⚙️

📄

❓

© Know-How Transfer
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SHAPE GLOBAL +

NO EXTERNAL HALOS

Halos Free

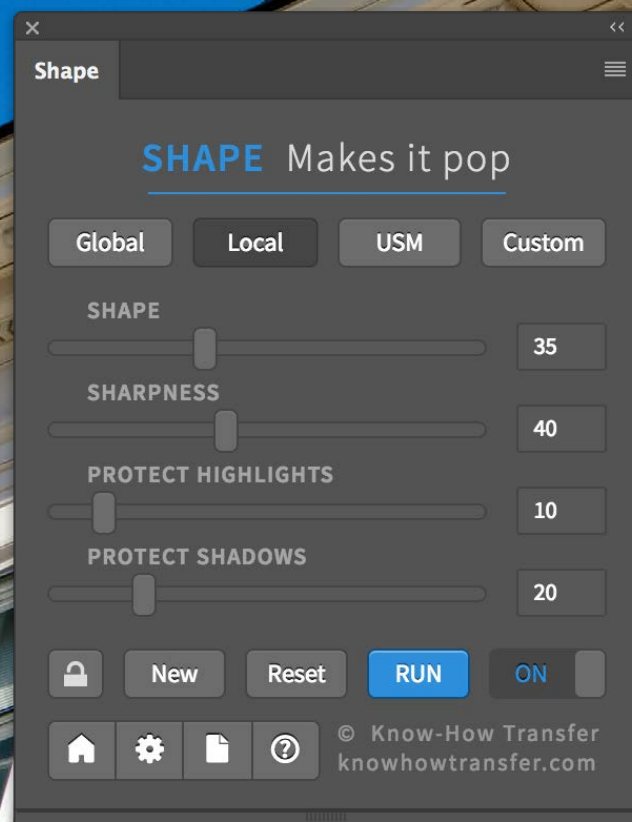
NO INTERNAL HALOS

Original

Shape Global +

Shape Local +

Next 50

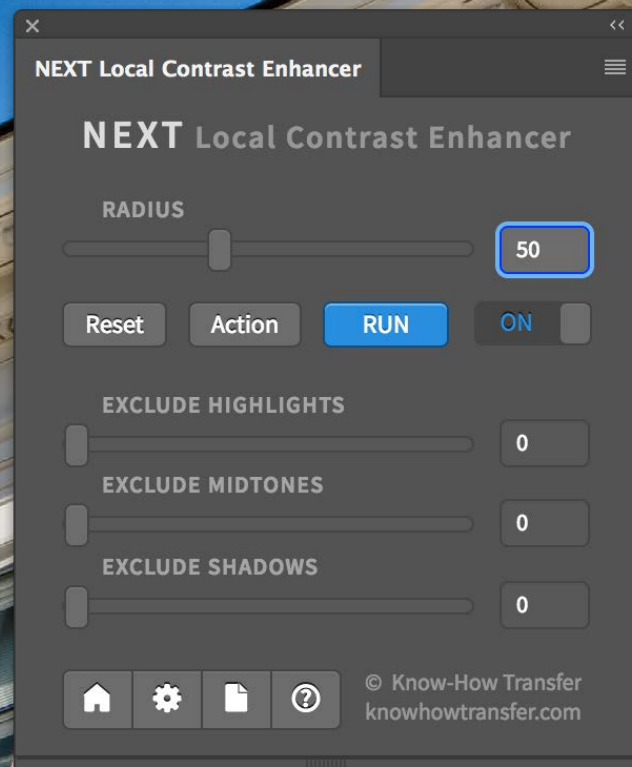


SHAPE LOCAL +

EXTERNAL HALOS
FIXABLE IN A LAYER MASK

Halos Free

INTERNAL HALOS
DIFFICULT TO CORRECT



NEXT 50

Original

Shape Global +

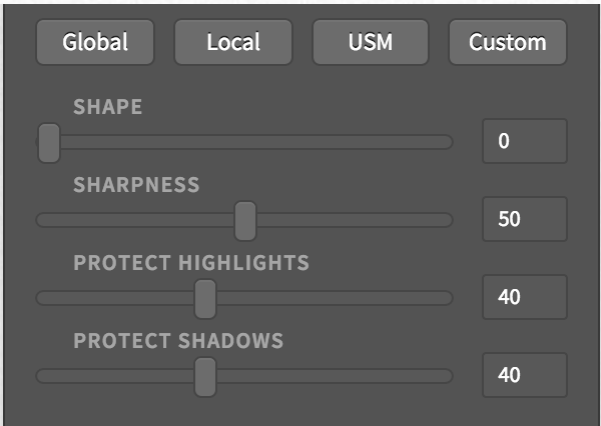
Shape Local +

Next 50

Shape is also an unconventional and exclusive sharpener

One of the Presets of Shape is USM. With the default setting, it works in basic mode using the Sharpness sliders only, and the Shape slider is set to 0. Color Boost also is set to 0 and the Protect Sliders to 40, 40. As a result, you may apply a classic USM that doesn't affect shadows and highlights that is where USM may create artifacts and noise.

Shape allows you much more advanced settings, additionally using the Shape slider set on very low radii and working to deliver a wider multi-radius range unsharp mask. **To start, try 1.5, 2.5, 5.**



Color mode

☐ RGB

☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost: 0

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius): 1.5

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 2.5

Low-Frequency (high radius): 5

Custom Preset

Shape: 50

Sharpness: 50

Highlights: 25

The "Advanced Options" area (left) affects the current working settings. The "Custom Preset" area (right) affects the "CustomPreset".

High-Frequency controls thinner details, and you can tweak it using the sharpness slider.

Sharpness

Shape

Mid and Low-Frequency control larger details, and you can tweak them using the Shape slider. In this case, Shape works as a sharpener. We suggest trying different values to find the setting that better fits your files.

Custom Preset

Shape: 50

Sharpness: 50

Highlights: 25

Shadows: 24

High-Frequency (low radius): 1.5

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 2.5

Low-Frequency (high radius): 5

☐ RGB

☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost: 0

Reset to Defaults

Save

Advanced inverted USM technique

This technique consists of assigning low radius settings to the two frequencies affecting the Shape slider (Mid and Low-Frequency) and higher radius to the High-Frequency tab. In this case, the Shape slider finely controls details, while the Sharpness slider controls larger areas adding shape intended as contrast.

This is a powerful technique with unlimited customization, including the Protect Sliders that avoid applying USM, where it may create artifacts and noise, and the Color Boost as part of the sharpening process.

To start try 10, 1.5, 2.5, then find your own values.

Color mode

RGB

Luminosity (faster)

Color boost: 12

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius): 10

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 1.5

Low-Frequency (high radius): 2.5

Custom Preset

Shape: 50

Sharpness: 50

Highlights: 25

The "Advanced Options" area (left) affects the current working settings.

The "Custom Preset" area (right) affects the "CustomPreset".

Sharpness slider, in this case, works as a short radius Shape.

Sharpness slider controlling shape

Shape slider controlling sharpness

Shape slider, in this case, works as a pure sharpener.

Watch samples in the next 5 pages

Know-How Transfer | NEXT Local Contrast Enhancer | 34



Advanced USM

Original

Shape USM

Shape USM CB=0

Inverted USM

PS USM

ORIGINAL

Advanced USM

Original

Shape USM

Shape USM CB=0

Inverted USM

PS USM

Shape Preferences

☐ Live Preview

Color mode

☐ RGB ☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost:

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius):

Mid-Frequency (mid radius):

Low-Frequency (high radius):

×

Shape

≡

SHAPE Makes it pop

Global

Local

USM

Custom

SHAPE

50

SHARPNESS

50

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

25

PROTECT SHADOWS

25

🔒

New

Reset

RUN

ON

⏻

🏠

⚙️

📄

❓

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SHAPE USM CB 12

Advanced USM

Original

Shape USM

Shape USM CB=0

Inverted USM

PS USM

Shape Preferences

☐ Live Preview

Color mode

☐ RGB ☒ Luminosity (faster)

Color boost:

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius):

Mid-Frequency (mid radius):

Low-Frequency (high radius):

×

Shape

≡

SHAPE Makes it pop

Global

Local

USM

Custom

SHAPE

50

SHARPNESS

50

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS

25

PROTECT SHADOWS

25

🔒

New

Reset

RUN

ON

⏻

🏠

⚙️

📄

❓

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SHAPE USM CB 0

Advanced USM

Original

Shape USM

Shape USM CB=0

Inverted USM

PS USM

Shape Preferences

☐ Live Preview

Color mode

☐ RGB ☒ Luminosity (faster)

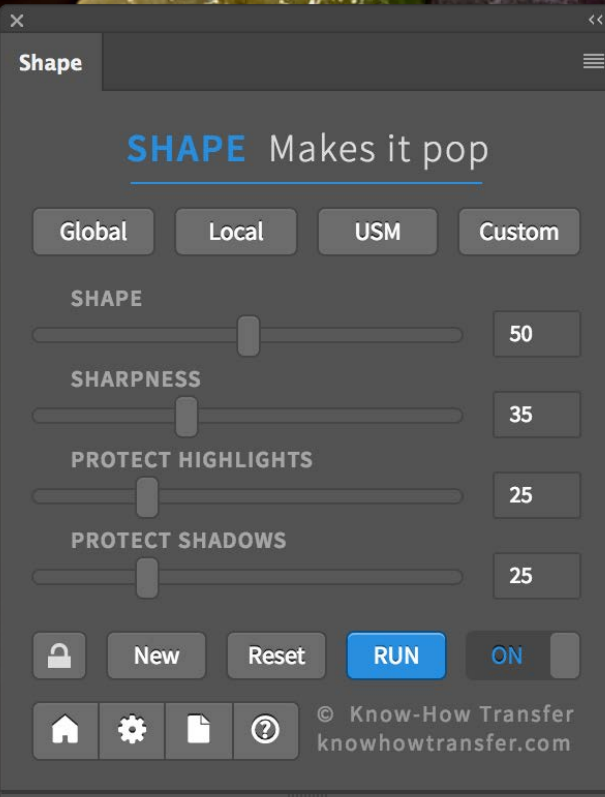
Color boost: 12

Advanced Options

High-Frequency (low radius): 10

Mid-Frequency (mid radius): 1.5

Low-Frequency (high radius): 2.5

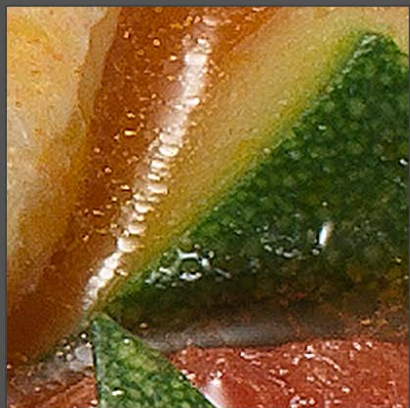


INVERTED TECHNIQUE



Advanced USM

Unsharp Mask



OK

Cancel

☒ Preview

100%

Amount: 150 %

Radius: 1.5 Pixels

Threshold: 0 levels

PHOTOSHOP USM

Original

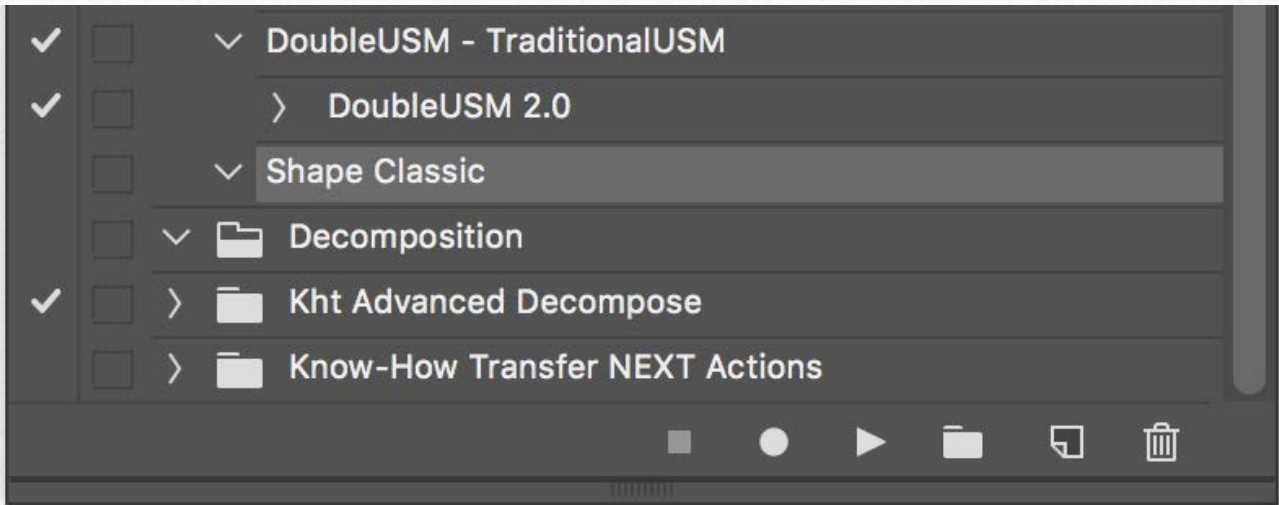
Shape USM

Shape USM CB=0

Inverted USM

PS USM

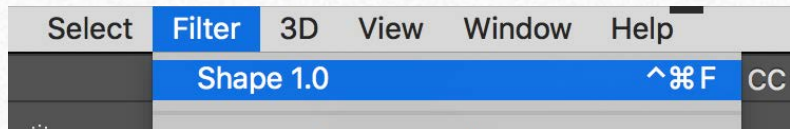
Add Shape to a Photoshop action



Save an action with your custom setting

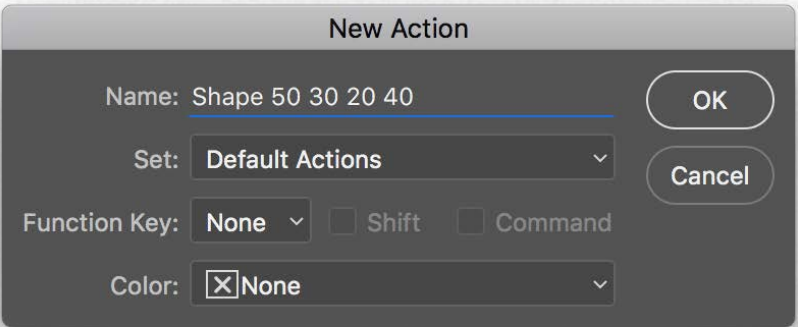
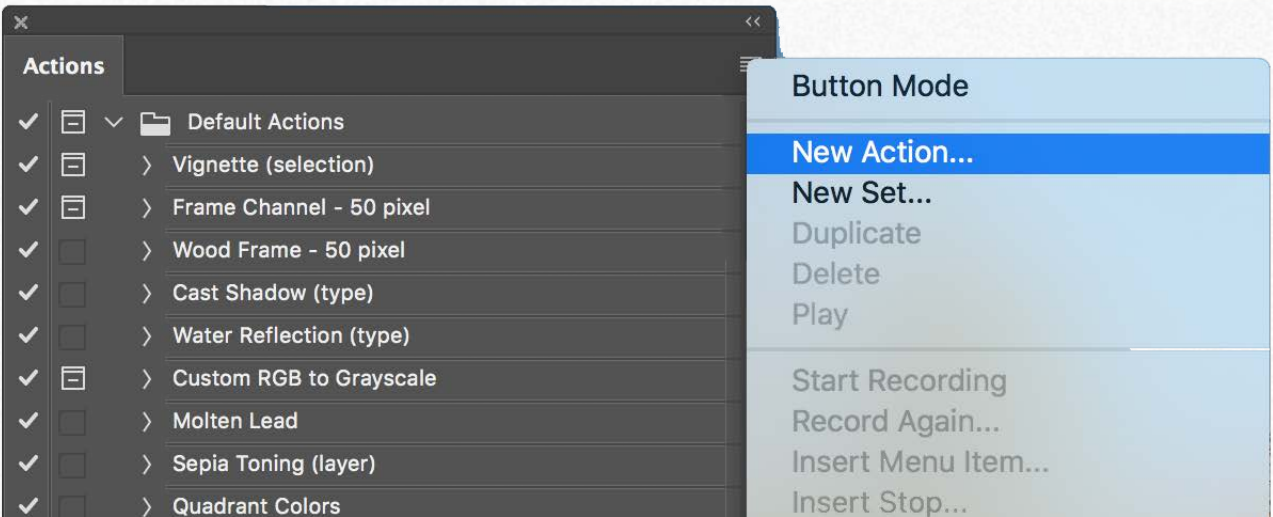
Whatever your setting is, you can save a custom action with the last used setting. This is how to save the Action

1. Apply Shape until you reach the best result.
 2. Open the Action tab from the Photoshop Window/Action menu.
 3. From the small menu in the top right, open the sub-menu and choose “New Action.”
 4. A window pops-up. Name the action and click on “Start Recording.”
- Save the Shape routine recalling the last filter



6. Stop recording by clicking on the red dot below.

You can recall that “one step” action to apply Shape with that setting in batch, or add it in a multi-step Photoshop Action.

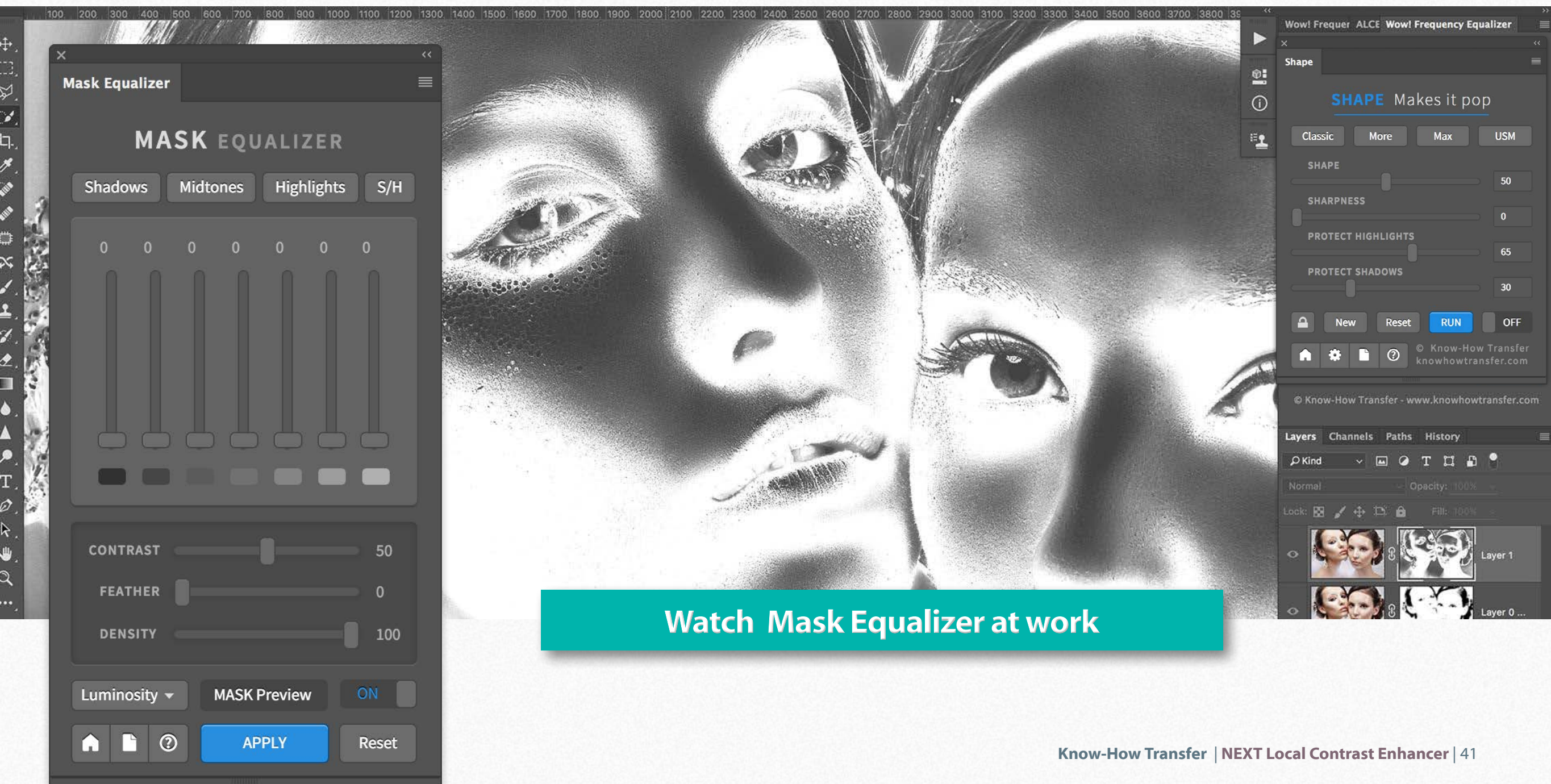


Shape + Mask Equalizer. Advanced manual masking control

Shape + Mask

Shape, through its 32bit frequency decomposing, creates a unique effect that gives its best when delimited as most possible to the mid-tones. The embedded Protect sliders are smooth and posterization-free and work very well in most cases.

For more control and to manually create layer masks, you can use Mask Equalizer. This plug-in that generates sophisticated luminosity masks is entirely independent of Shape, but it shines when they are used together. It also works with adjustment layers, advanced objects, and groups.



Mask Equalizer

MASK EQUALIZER

Shadows Midtones Highlights S/H

0 0 0 0 0 0 0

CONTRAST 50

FEATHER 0

DENSITY 100

Luminosity MASK Preview ON

APPLY Reset

Shape

SHAPE Makes it pop

Classic More Max USM

SHAPE 50

SHARPNESS 0

PROTECT HIGHLIGHTS 65

PROTECT SHADOWS 30

New Reset RUN OFF

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Layers Channels Paths History

Kind Opacity: 100%

Normal Lock: Fill: 100%

Layer 1

Layer 0 ...

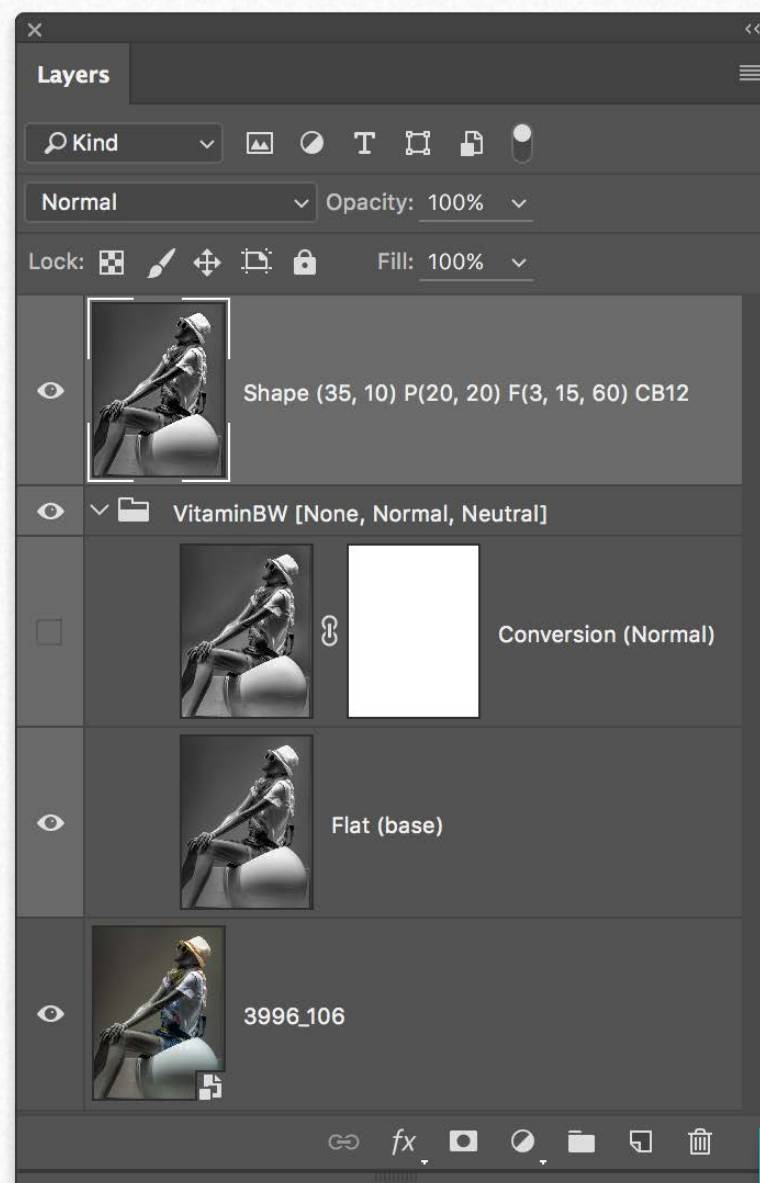
Watch Mask Equalizer at work

Shape with VitaminBW2. Advanced contrast control

VitaminBW 2 embeds a powerful contrast enhancer. It works automatically by setting a radius value proportional to the file size. The auto radius is easy to use and beautiful, but it's not customizable and flexible.

Alternatively, you can use VitaminBW 2 in layered mode, deactivating the "Conversion" layer and apply Shape. In this way, you can modulate the contrast much more.

This workflow combines the best B&W converter with the best contrast enhancer.



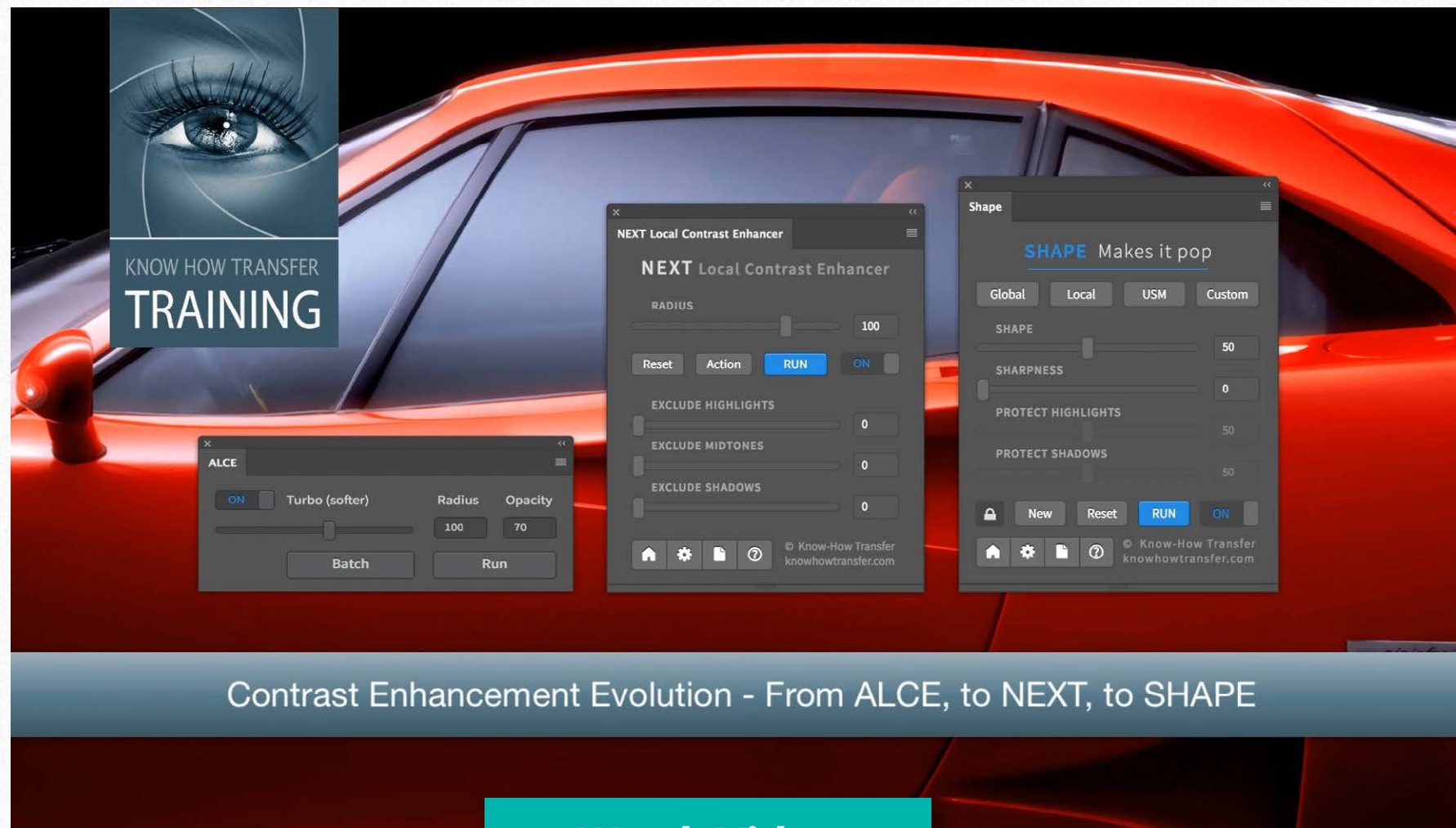
Watch Video

Shape with Next. Halos fix and a more flexible contrast control

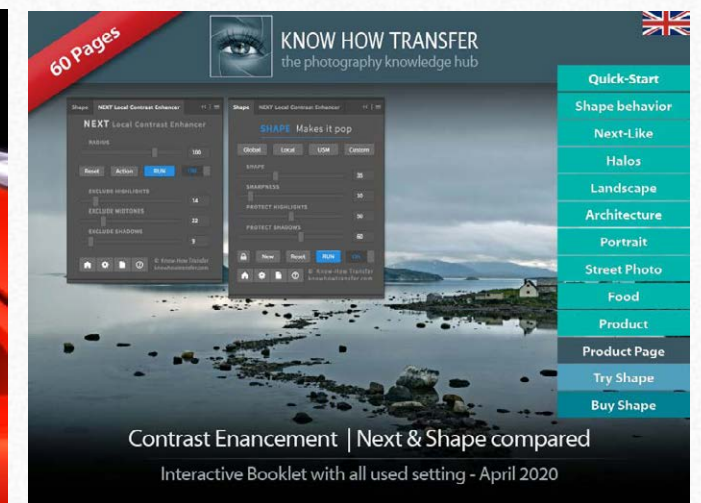
Shape + Next

Shape and Next are different in terms of behavior, color engine, and algorithm. Shape allowed us to add key functions that were difficult, if not impossible, to implement in Next. So Shape is the perfect tool to work alongside NEXT, especially for fixing the halos issue.

We do recommend to watch the video, download the comparison booklet and the sample files package.



Watch Video



Sample files package

Interactive booklet

Opening Shape from the Filter menu nothing happens

The filter item is only for support use.
Open Shape from Windows/Extensions menu

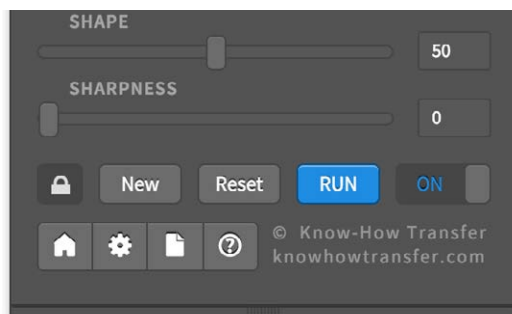
After install, there is no Shape in the Extensions list

1. You have not restarted Photoshop after the install.
2. Check into PS/Preferences/Plug-ins if "Load Extensions Panels" is checked.
3. You are installing on Photoshop CS6 or older that are not compatible.
4. In WIN, you are working on 32bit. Shape only works on 64bit.

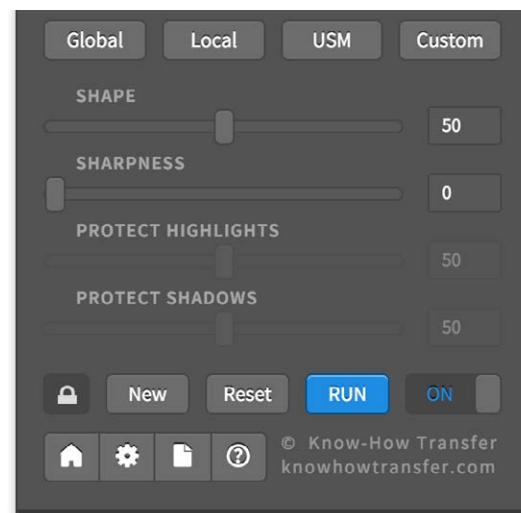
Uninstall Shape

Launch the installer and click on "Uninstall".

The panel is smaller and doesn't show up the protect sliders



Use this small handle
to expand or contract the panel



Shape is very slow in CC 2014 or older

Probably you are using Photoshop CC or CC 2014 and dragging the layers cursor. Because of an Adobe issue, while dragging the sliders, the preview is continuously applied, significantly slowing down the process. So do not drag and release. Just point and click where you want the cursor to stop. Watch the dedicated tutorial. It shows Mask Equalizer, but Shape is the same.

Dedicated tutorial

Install additional step for pre-CC 2014 users

We mean the first version of CC, released in 2013. 2014 and later are OK.

Move the in folder com.knowhowtransfer.shape
from CEP to CEPServiceManager4 folder

Here below the paths for WIN

C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Adobe\CEP\extensions\

C:\Program Files (x86)\Common Files\Adobe\CEPServiceManager4\extensions\

Here below the paths for MAC

Macintosh HD/Library/Application Support/Adobe/CEP/extensions

Macintosh HD/Library/Application Support/Adobe/ CEPServiceManager4/extensions/

If you don't see the folder CEPServiceManager4 create it manually and inside, create a folder named "extensions". Please type them as they are. Names are case-sensitive.

How to add Shape to a Photoshop Action

It's quick and easy. See the instruction on page 23.
Or tick the green button "Actions" in the cover menu.

Actions

Still have problems?

[Go to FAQ page](#)[Contact Support](#)

Update the current version or download again

Check if a newer release is available

Here where you can check the latest version number

1. [At the bottom of the product page](#)
2. In the FAQ page under Version and Compatibility
3. In the purchase page

Download the latest version of the application

To download the latest version;

1. [Go to your My Account Page](#)
2. Log-in using your username and your password. If you don't remember it, please use the password recovery service.

Once inside you can:

1. Download the latest version of the purchased applications.
2. Edit your personal details, password and email address included.
- 3 You can of course also add our freeware or buy new products.

In this case, once completed the payment go back to your "My account page" and download the app just purchased.

Downloadable items

1. MAC installer, as a DNG
2. WIN installer, as an EXE

[Check Version](#)

[My Account Page](#)

[Download Manual](#)



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the photography knowledge hub

About Know-How Transfer The Photography Knowledge Hub

Everyone dealing with photography and digital imaging will find a unique mix of instructional and how-to content here. We offer applications specifically designed by photographers for photographers, as well as effective tutorials and free resources. Our mission is to create a community, a Central Hub of Photography Knowledge, where photographers can exchange experiences, share information and grow their skills.

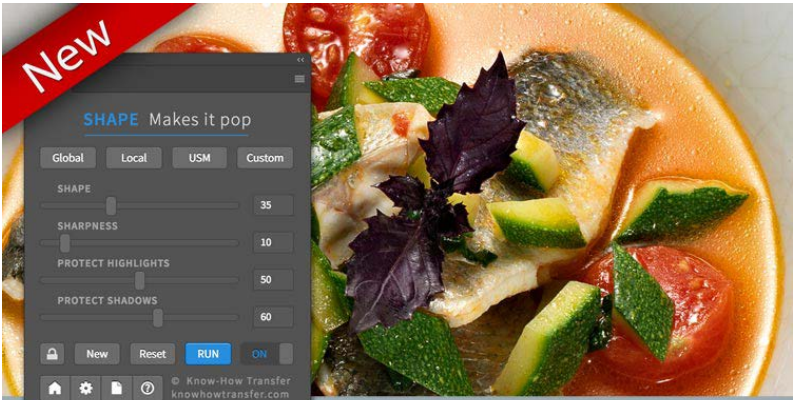
Many of our team come from the school of the great Dan Margulis and still have a very special relationship with him. We are pleased to report here what he wrote about this group in his famous post “La Dolce Vita - An era ends”:

Watch the About Us Video

La Dolce Vita. An Era Ends By Dan Margulis

They say that Italians get emotional at times like this, and that Italians love beautiful things. I admit to feeling a bit Italian myself as I write this. I *have* developed an emotional attachment to the country, no doubt. And the relationships I have entered into with several of my students in that country have evolved into something, well, profoundly loving. The old joke has it that in heaven, all lovers are Italian. Right offhand I can think of a couple of exceptions to this generality, but there is no need to go off-topic.

The truth is that it is a land of love and great beauty, made all the more beautiful professionally by seeing the new and sophisticated imaging algorithms being developed by Davide with Marco Olivotto, and by seeing how Alessandro, Daniele Di Stanio, Tiziano Fruet and others have brought first-class color instruction into a country where it was rarely found previously.

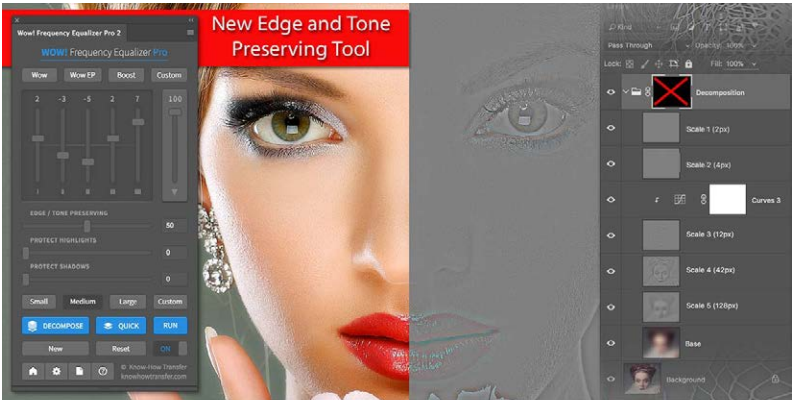


SHAPE

Midtones Global/Local Contrast Manager

Buy Shape

Read more

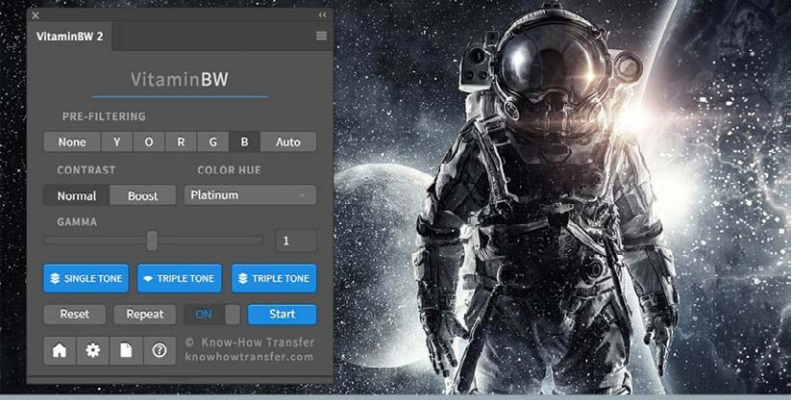


Wow! Frequency Equalizer Pro 2

Five Bands Separation With Sliders or Decomposing

Buy Wow Pro 2

Read more

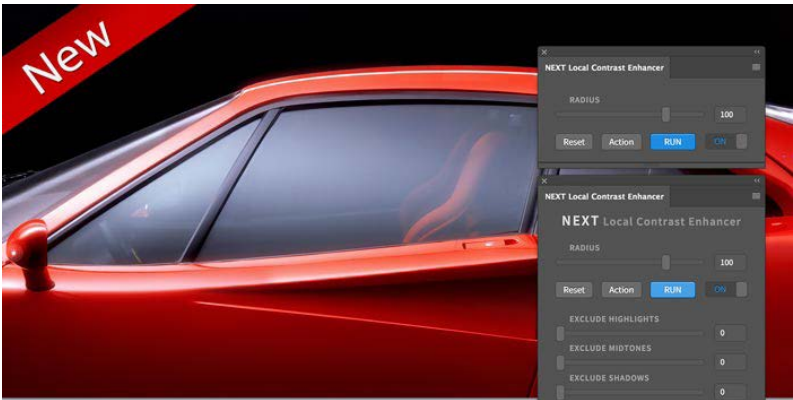


VitaminBW 2

Advanced Black and White Conversion and Editing

Buy VitaminBW 2

Read more



NEXT

Next Generation Local Contrast Enhancer

Buy NEXT

Read more



Double USM 2

Sharpen Controlling Dark and Light Halos Separately

Buy Double USM 2

Read more



Mask Equalizer

Creates Masks From Multiple Tonal Ranges

Buy Mask Equalizer

Read more

Extensions for Photoshop CC and CS



Buy CPT

Read more

Professional raw scan service



Hasselblad 3F 16bit Raw Scan

The Best Service on the Market. For your Analog Workflow

Buy 16bit Raw Scan

Read more

Photoshop Plugins Page

Store

Trials versions



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Plugin developed by KnowHowTransfer

GUI Panel Design by Davide Barranca

Images credits:

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