

Here at Pounds Labs we constantly strive to introduce new and exciting things that will help out our clients. In a continuation of that effort, we are going to be offering tutorials on Photoshop in our monthly newsletter. Along with these tutorials, we are going to offer you the option to submit Photoshop questions and ideas for tutorials that you would like to see. We would love to hear from you! You can submit your ideas to [answers@poundslabs.com](mailto:answers@poundslabs.com). Jennifer Crutchfield, our new Graphic Designer, will be leading this initiative.

## The Power of Automation: Actions in Photoshop

One of the amazing things that you can do in Photoshop is creating Actions. Photoshop Actions record everything that you do to a file and then allow you to repeat it with the click of a button. As you can imagine, this has a variety of uses, and it can save you a ton of time!

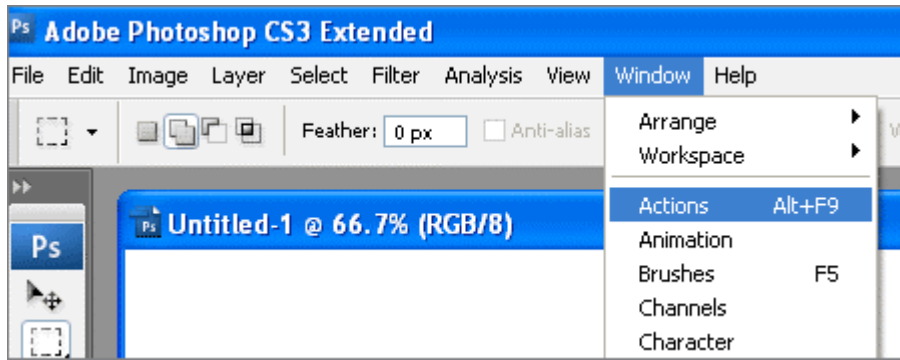
*Some uses for Photoshop Actions include:*

- Reducing file sizes
- Saving files for the web
- Saving and closing several files
- Batch color correction
- Batch application of filters
- Batch file conversions (CMYK to RGB, color to B&W, adding sepia tone, etc.)
- Adding frames and borders
- Batch addition of watermarks
- Resizing files
- Importing pictures into a file as layers
- Adding creative backgrounds
- Filling in template pages
- Or anything else you can imagine!

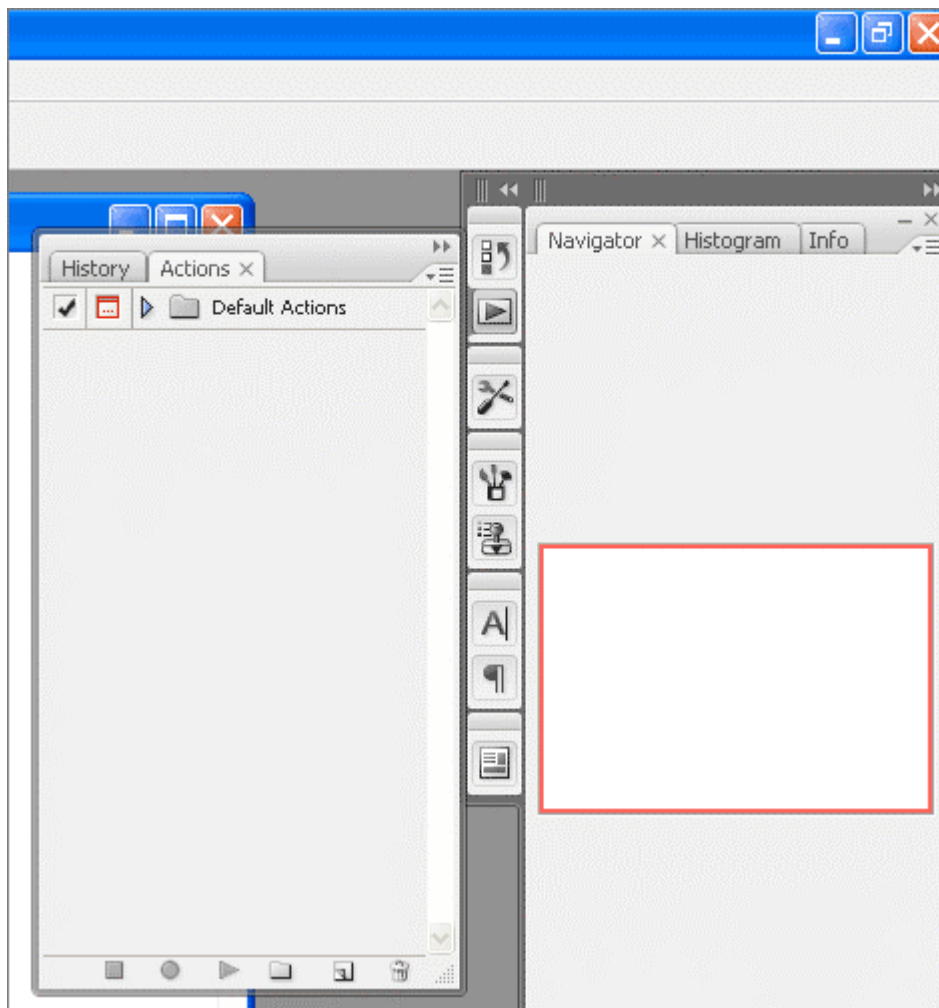
Another great thing about using actions is that you can very easily create an action and then run it on an entire batch of files at once. Talk about improving your workflow! Now that you know the benefits of using actions, here's the process:

### **STEP 1 – Locating Your Action Pallet:**

First things first, you'll need to find your actions pallet in Photoshop. If it is not already loaded on your screen simply go to the menu bar and pick "window", then select "Actions". Alternatively, you can hit the hotkey Alt+F9.

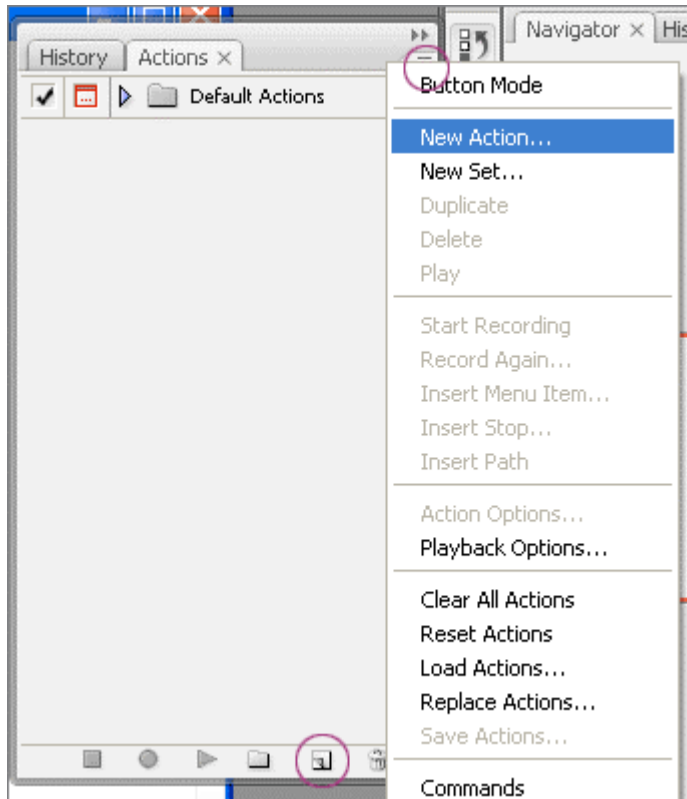


The actions pallet should open on the right hand side of the screen in the same place as your "History" Pallet, though it will vary depending on how you have your workspace set up.

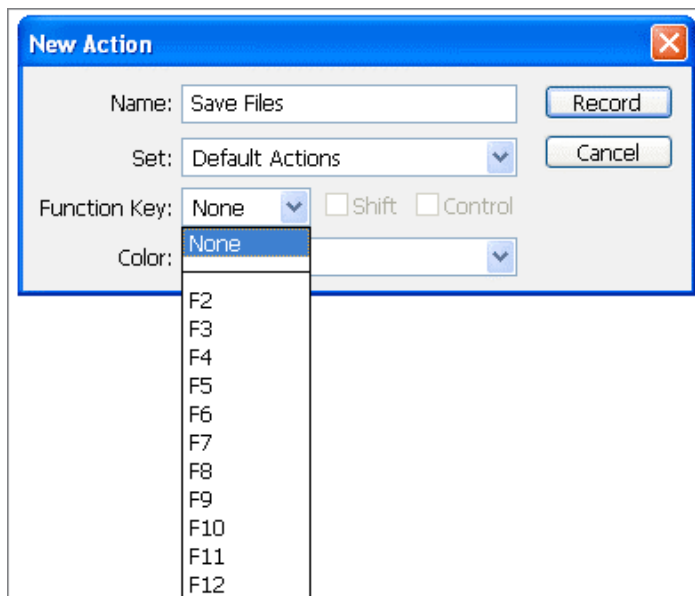


## STEP 2 – Creating a New Action:

Once you have located your actions pallet, you'll need to create a new action. There's a couple ways of doing this; You can either click on the menu in the Actions pallet and select "New Action", or you can click on the "new action" button at the bottom of the panel.



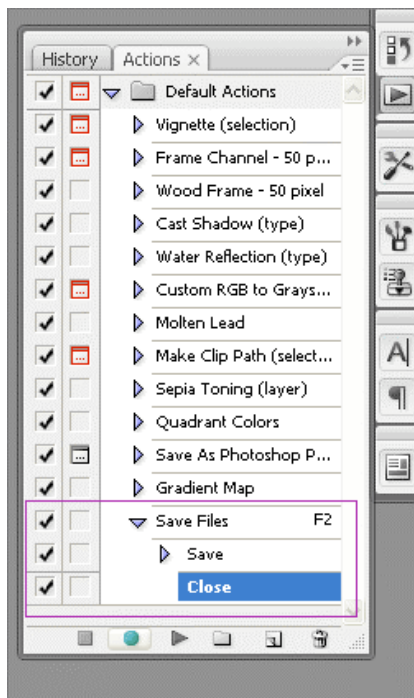
This will pop up a dialog box that looks something like this:



Name your new action something you can remember. Mine is called “Save Files”, since I made a simple action that saves and closes files. On this screen you can also add a function key (hot key) to your Action. Once these are set, go ahead and press record. Once you have pushed the record button, everything you do in Photoshop will be recorded as part of the action. This will continue until you push the “stop” button at the bottom of the Actions pallet (shown below).

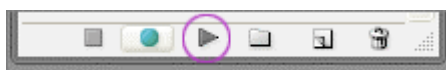


Once you have completed your action, you should see it listed in your Actions Pallet like so:



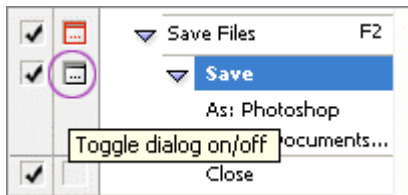
### STEP 3 – Using an Action:

To Use Your Newly Created Action, all you need to do is select the action you want to use, make sure the file that you want the action ran on is open and selected, and press the play button on the action panel. (Shown below)



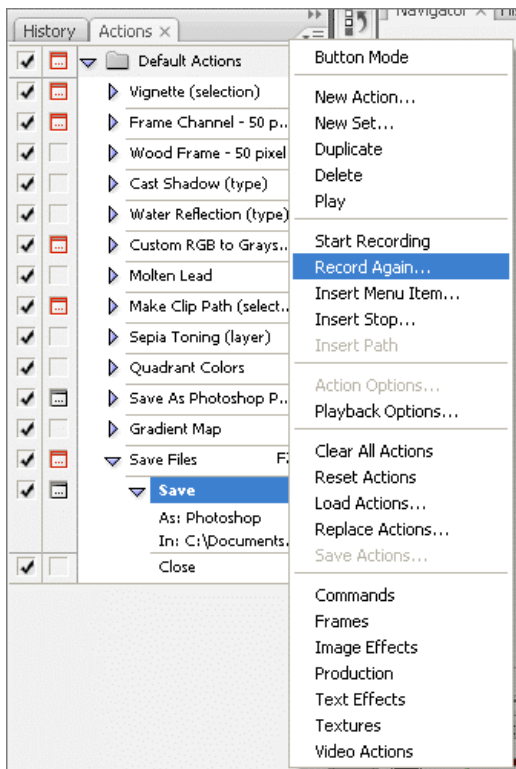
## STEP 4 – Toggle Dialogue Boxes On and Off:

Sometimes you don't want an action to be entirely automated. If you would like the option to do something manually somewhere within the action (like input your own file name on a save screen), there's an easy way to do that. Highlight the step you want control of and click the box next to the checkmark. (This will Toggle the Dialogue box on.) If at some point in time you decide you don't want the action to pause for input anymore, you can simply toggle the dialogue off by clicking the box again.



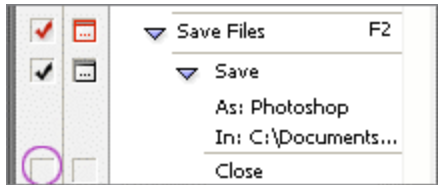
## STEP 5 – Changing Parts of Actions:

If you decide there is something about an action you don't like, or you made a mistake on the steps while you were making an action, you can change the action by selecting the "Record Again" command. This command can be located under the menu in the Actions pallet. Simply select the part of the Action you want to change, hit "Record Again", and repeat that step.



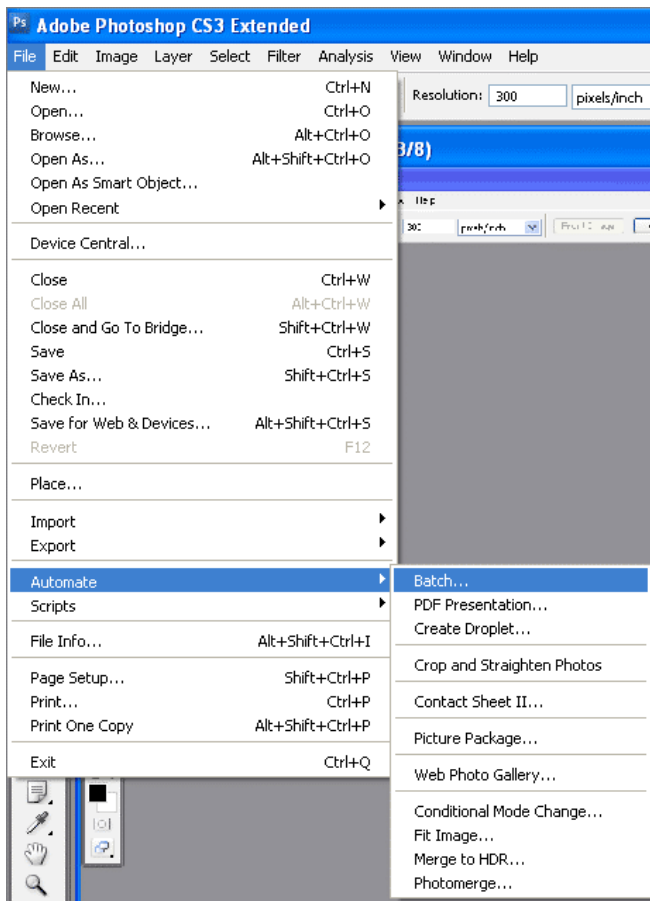
## STEP 6 – Excluding Parts of Actions:

If for some reason, you want to use an Action, but there is a step that you would like to skip, there is an easy way to do that. All you need to do is uncheck the box next to that particular step of the Action, and the action will skip that step. If you want to completely remove a certain part of the action, simply select that portion and hit the “delete” button at the bottom of the Action pallet.



## STEP 7 – Running Actions on Batches of Files

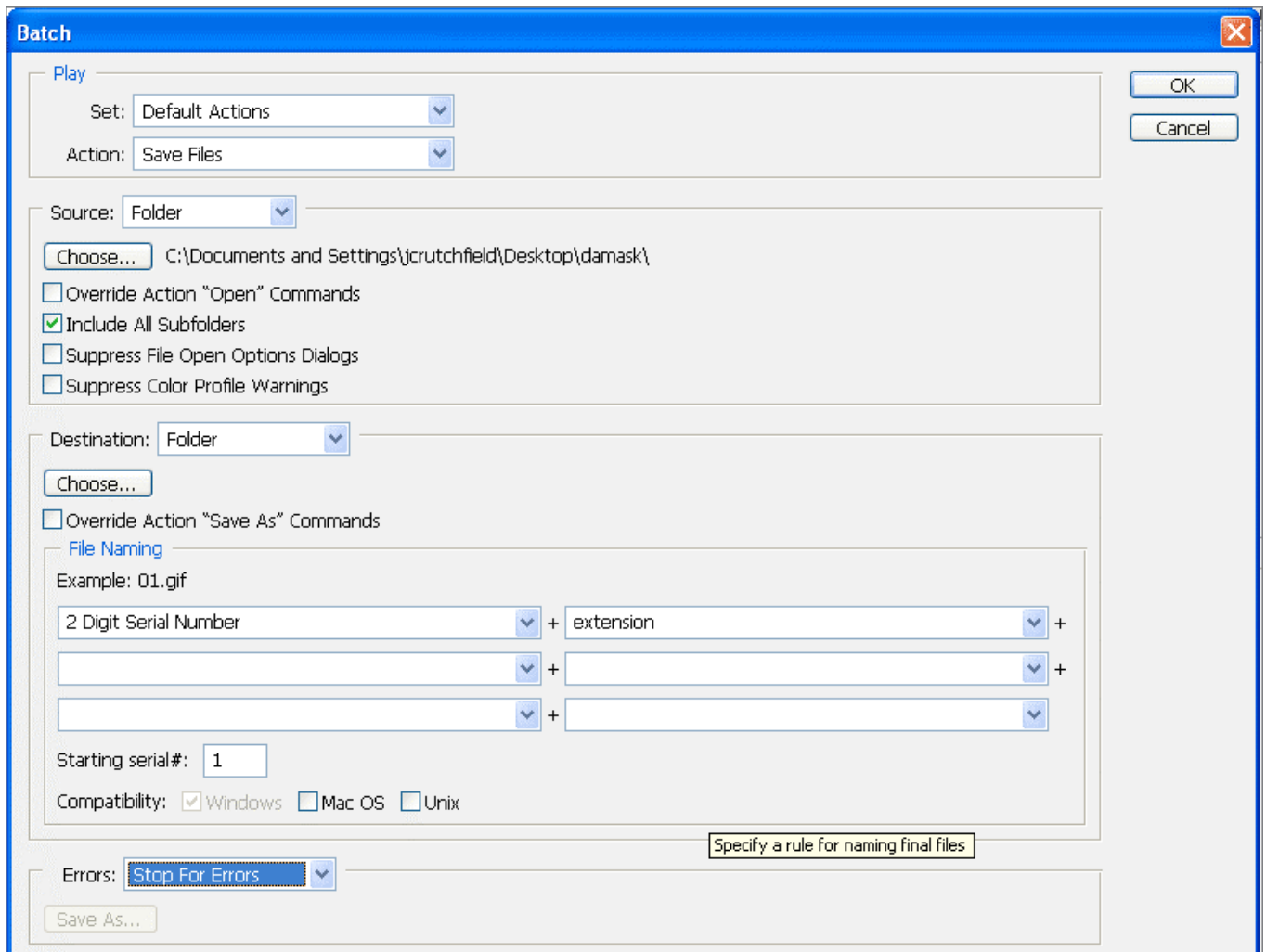
Another useful feature is the ability to run actions on an entire folder of files. You must have already made your action to do this. To use this feature, go to “File” on the menu bar, hover over the “Automate” option, and select “Batch...”.



This will bring up a dialogue box. In the Dialogue box under “Action:”, select the action you want to use. There are several options available to you in this dialogue box. Under “Source:” select “Folder, and then hit the “choose...” button. This allows you to select what files will be run through in this batch. If you have seperated all your pictures into subfolders, you can check the “Include All Subfolders” option.

To chose where your files will end up, select “Folder” under the “Destination” Section, and then hit the “Choose...” button to pick where your files will go. If you have already specified a folder in your action, you don’t need to select this portion. Or alternately, by selecting the “Override Ation “Save As” Commands” option, you can select a different place to save things than is specified by your action.

Another option in the dialogue box is Document names. There’s an extensive list of ways to name a files, and you can even specify what number the serial number starts at. This feature is particularly useful if you have a naming convention!

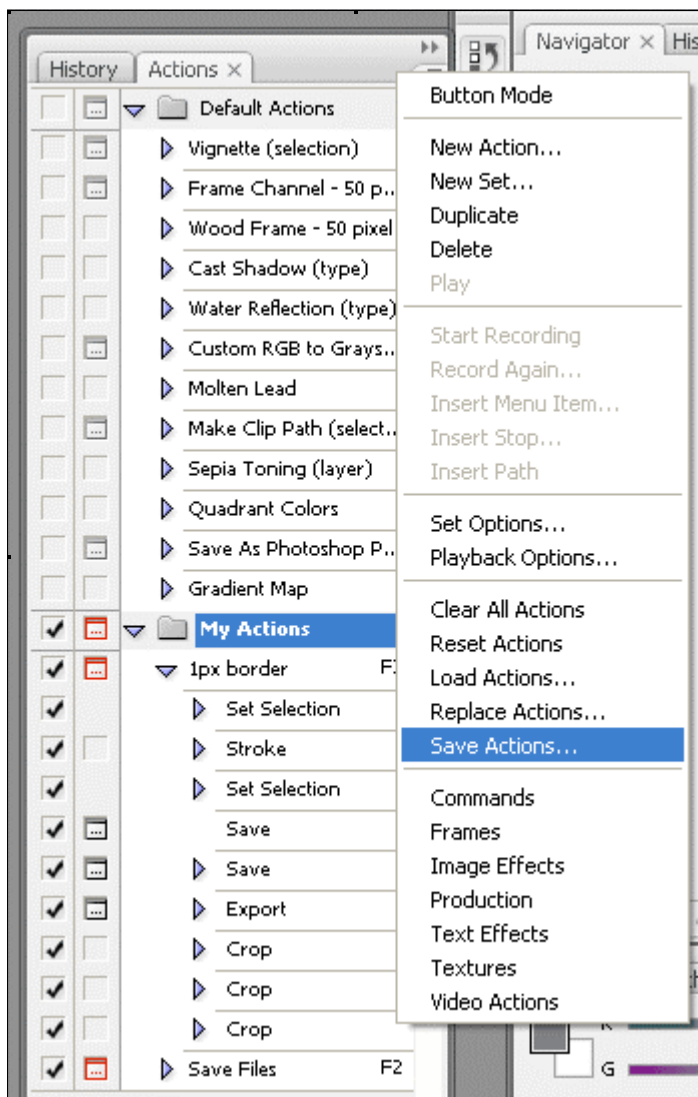


## STEP 8 – Sharing Your Actions

So you've made a bunch of cool new actions, and now you want to share them with your friends. If you have been adding your actions to the "Default Actions" Folder, you will need to Create a new folder. You can do this by clicking on the "New Folder" icon at the bottom of the Actions pallet, then dragging your actions into that folder.



Once you've got that set up, select your folder. Click the menu button on the Actions pallet and select the "Save Actions" option. All you need to do then is save it somewhere you can find again!



We hope this overview has been helpful for everyone! Be sure and do something fun with the time you save! If you have any questions about this tutorial, or any questions about Photoshop in general, feel free to send us an email at [answers@poundslabs.com](mailto:answers@poundslabs.com).

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