



Shine Reduction Action

Shine Reduction Action

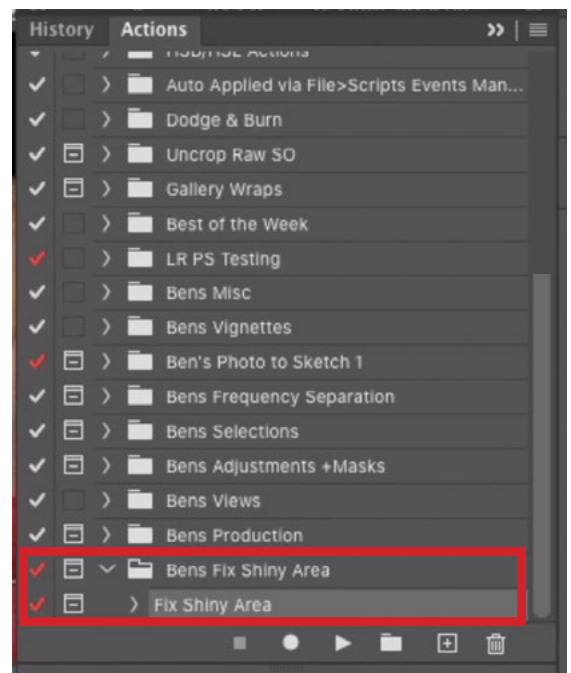
I have something special for you in this week's lesson. I have created a detailed action that will help you to reduce the shiny spots that typically appear on skin (but that can appear in other places as well). This action will guide you through a process that would otherwise be very complex and it will allow you to complete the task much faster.

In this lesson, I will show you how to install and use the action. In the next lesson, we'll talk about instances when this action would not be effective and how we would tackle the problem in those examples.

Download and Install Action (Timestamp 1:14)

The action included with this lesson is contained within a folder called "Ben's Fix Shiny Area." When you download the action from the lesson page, it will be compressed into a zipped file. You will need to double-click on this zipped file in order to "unzip" the file and see its contents. Once unzipped/uncompressed, the file name will end with ".atn." To load the action into Photoshop, you can usually simply double-click on the file. Photoshop will come to the forefront on your screen, indicating that the action was successfully loaded. (There will be no prompt indicating that you successfully installed an action.) You can find the action listed at the bottom of the Actions Panel.

Note: If the Actions Panel is not visible on your screen, you can access it by clicking on the Window menu and choosing Actions.



Once the action has been loaded, it will appear at the bottom of the list within the Actions Panel.

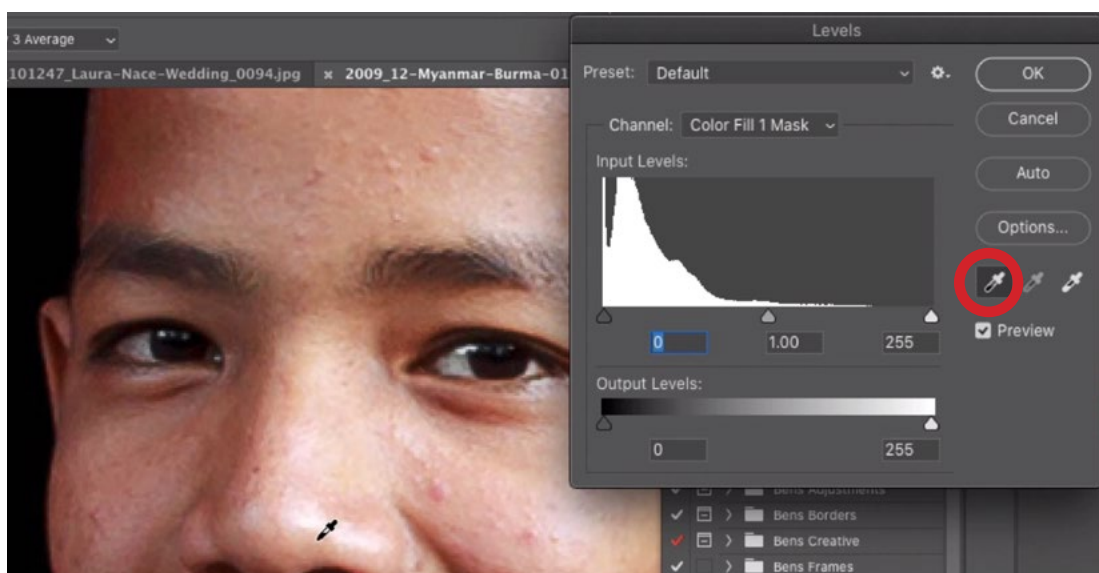
If, for some reason, the action does not load by double-clicking on the file, then you can load it manually. To do this, open the Actions Panel in Photoshop and click on the little menu in the top right corner of the panel. From this menu, choose the “Load Actions” option. You’ll be prompted to navigate on your hard drive to the location where the action file is stored. Be sure that you choose the file that has been unzipped.

Using the Action (2:37)

This action is going to assume that you know how to use it, so that’s what we’ll cover here.

Levels Adjustment To start running the action, make sure it is selected within the Actions Panel and then click the little triangular Play button at the bottom of the panel. The first thing that will happen is the Levels dialog will pop up. There are three little eyedropper icons on the right side of the dialog. You will need to use two of these: the black one and the white one.

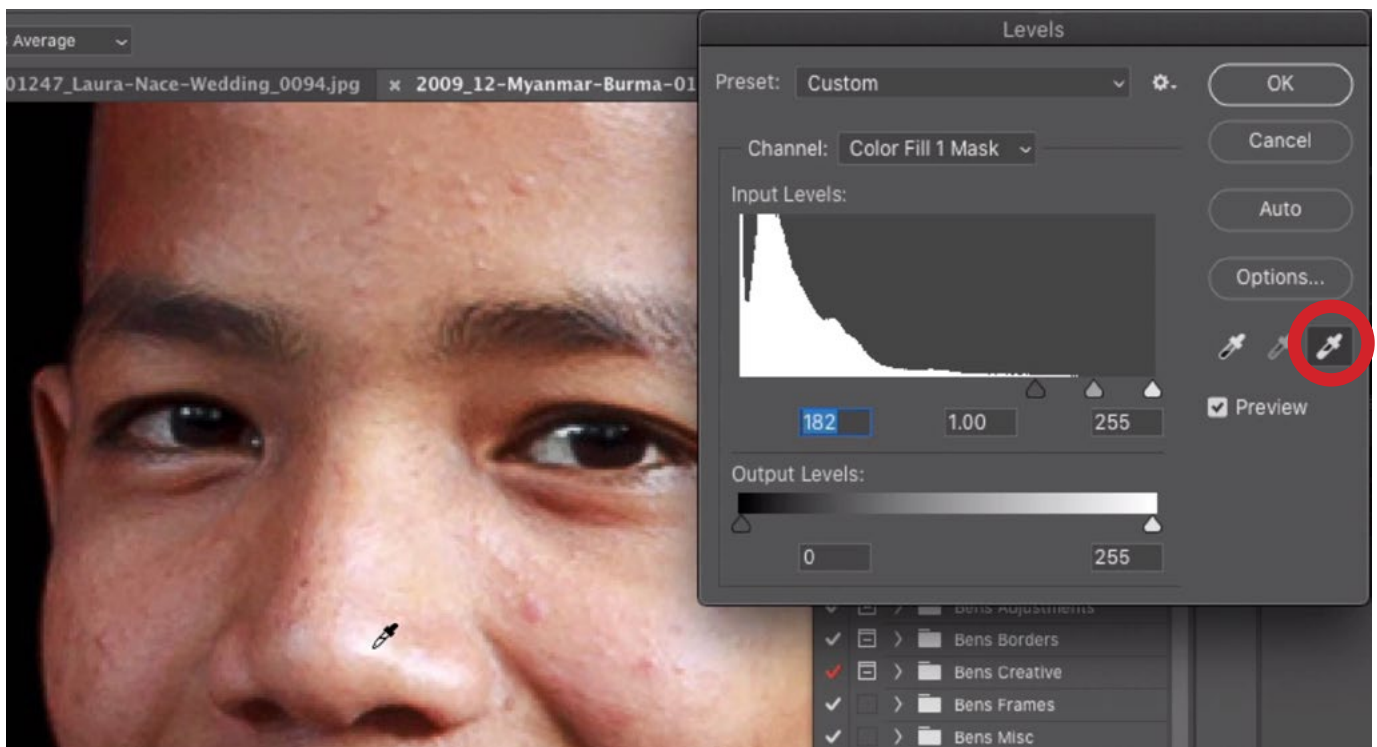
Activate the black eyedropper and use it to click on the brightest shade that surrounds the shiny area you want to correct (but isn’t actually part of it). In the video example, I want to reduce the shine on the boy’s nose and I used the black eyedropper to click in the light area that’s just outside the shiny patch (see screen shot).



Within the Levels adjustment, the black eyedropper is being used to click on the brightest shade surrounding the shiny area.

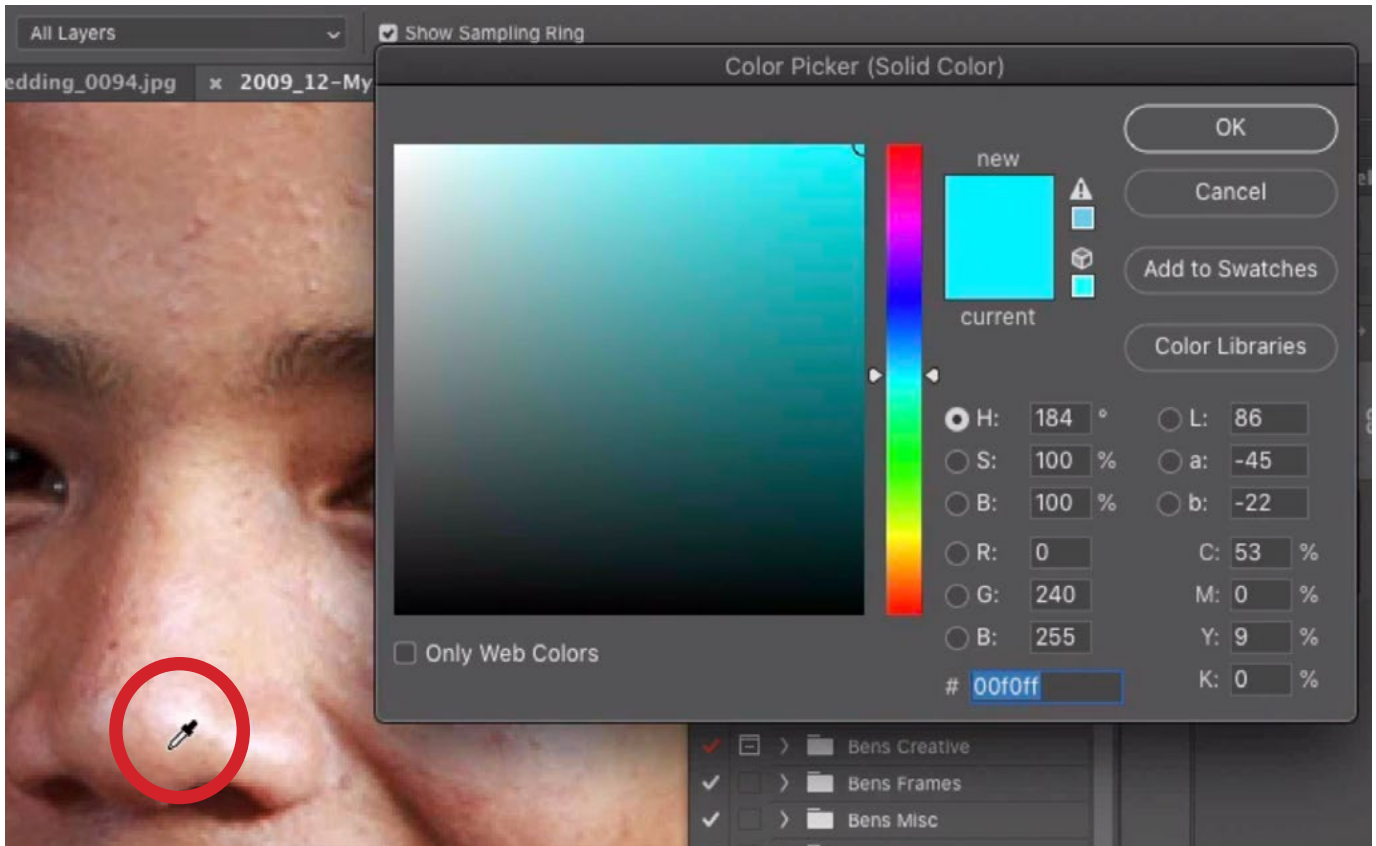
Next, activate the white eyedropper and use it to click on what appears to be the brightest part of the shiny area. Click the OK button to exit the Levels dialog.

What this Levels adjustment does is try to isolate the shiny area, based on those two areas where you clicked.



Within the Levels adjustment, the white eyedropper is being used to click on the brightest part of the shiny area.

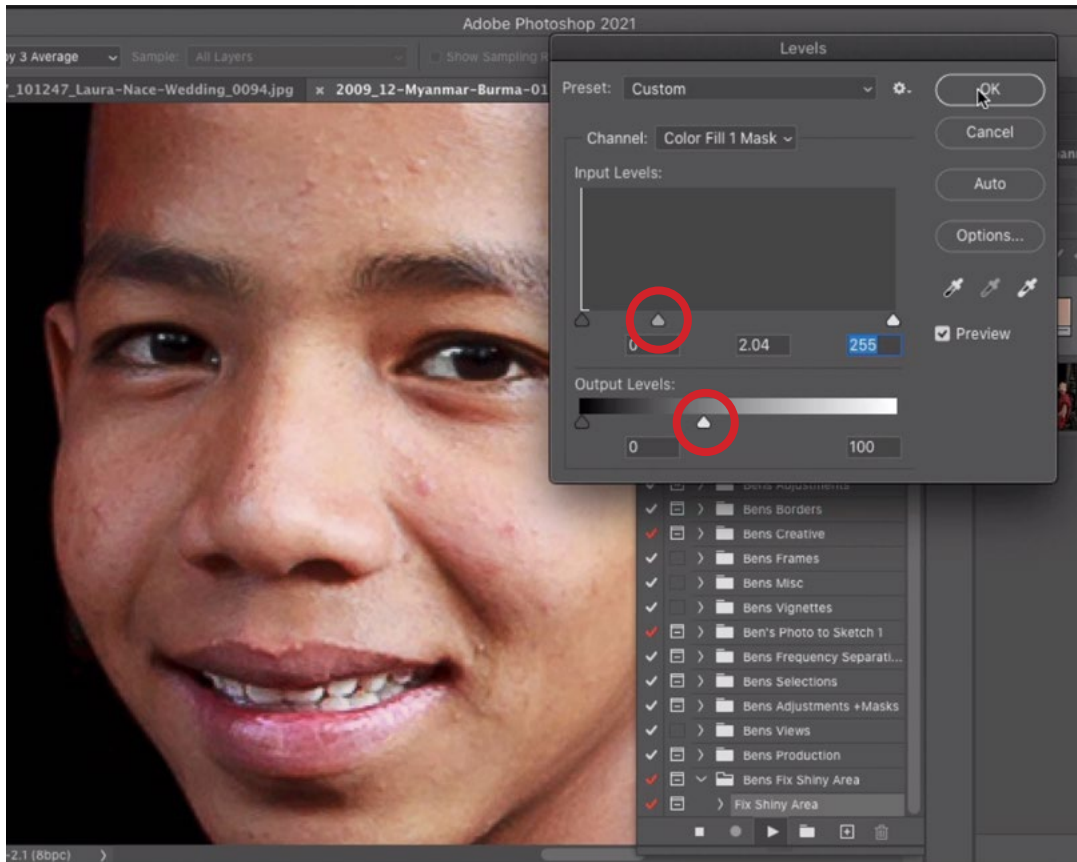
Color Picker After the Levels adjustment has been completed, the action will then present you with the Color Picker. Here, it wants you to choose a color that would be appropriate to use for filling the shiny spot. The appropriate color will probably be similar to the hue that is surrounding the shiny area. With the Color Picker open, your cursor will look like an eyedropper. Use it to click on the color that should be used to fill the shiny spot. In the video example, I clicked on a light area of skin that is directly surrounding the spot. Then click the OK button in the Color Picker dialog in order to close it.



When the Color Picker opens, we are clicking on a color that's right outside the shiny spot. This is the color that will be used to fill the spot.

Fine tune in Levels Now you will see the shiny spot filled with the color you chose. The action will again open the Levels dialog. Here, you will use two sliders to find-tune the end result. Use the white slider on the Output Levels gradient to control how strongly the color is applied. Moving it to the left will apply the color less. Move it to the right to apply the color more.

Use the middle slider under the Input Levels chart to control the transition between the targeted area and the rest of the image. I like to move this slider back and forth to the extremes and then settle on a middle point that looks ideal. After fine-tuning these sliders, click the OK button to close the Levels dialog.



The shiny spot was filled with the chosen color and the Levels dialog opens again. Here, we are using the two circled sliders to fine-tune the effect.

Paint in effect When you do this, it's isolating areas based on brightness. Therefore, anything else in your picture that is of the same brightness level will get the same effect. That will not be ideal, so the next step in the action will be to completely remove the effect, by means of a layer mask. This allows you to manually paint the



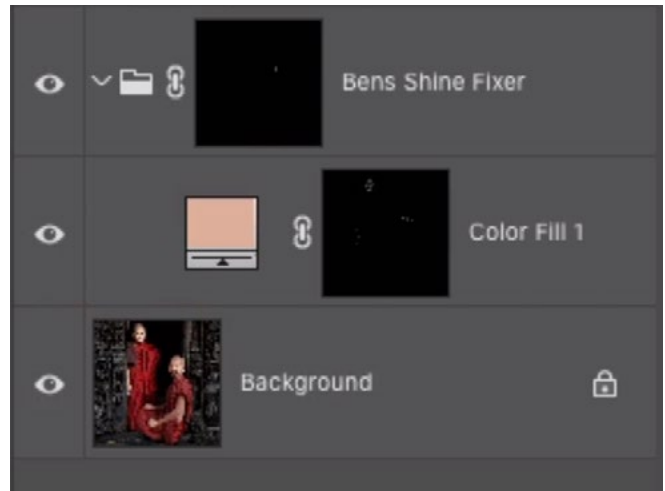
effect back in, just in the areas where it's appropriate. Use the Brush Tool to paint with white (using a soft brush) only in the areas that really needed the change. You could also lower the opacity if you don't want the effect to be applied at full strength.

The Brush Tool is being used to paint in the area where we want the shine reduction to be applied.

Looking at the Layers Panel, you will see that the action created a Color Fill layer, which will be set to the color you chose using the Color Picker. If you'd like to change the color after running the action, you can double click on the color swatch for that layer and the Color Picker will appear again. You can once again use the eyedropper to select a different color from the image.

The action also created a layer group, which has a layer mask attached to it. This is the mask that you were painting on when you chose where the effect should apply to your picture.

If you ever want to view the contents of a layer mask in the main image window, hold down the Option key (Alt on Win) and click on the mask's thumbnail. The black and white mask will appear in the image window and you can see whether or not you need to tweak it. Use the same shortcut to exit this view.



This is the Layers Panel after the action has been run. There will be a new Color Fill layer, as well as a folder/group with a layer mask applied to it.

Using New Empty Layer to Avoid Problems (6:45)

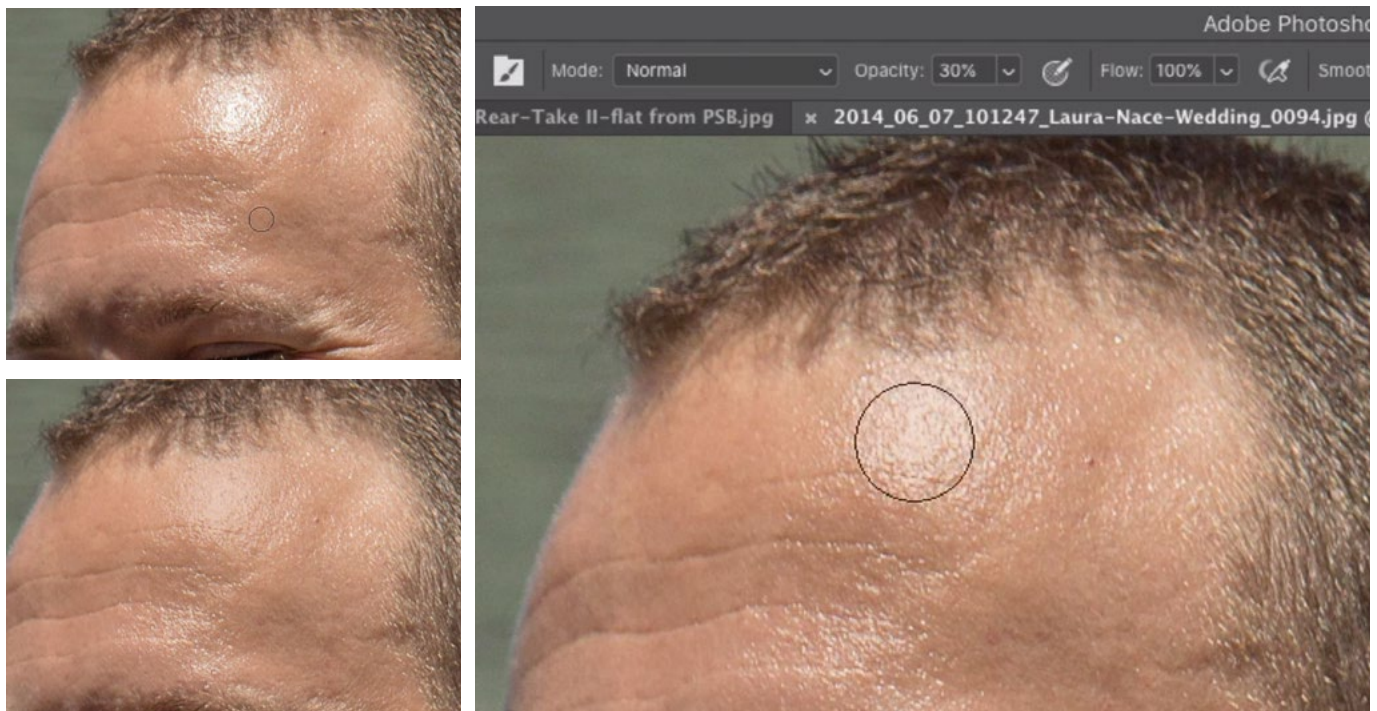
There are certain things that can cause the action to not work properly. You need to be careful if you have a lot going on in your Layers Panel, especially if you have grouped any layers. If you have a layer group active when you run the action, everything the action does will get shoved inside that group.

To avoid any problems, create a new, empty layer and place it at the top of the layer stack. Make sure this empty layer is active at the time you run the action. This way, everything the action does will happen on top of this empty layer.

Lower Brush Opacity if Result Looks Unnatural (14:55)

There are times when the results of the shine reduction can look too abrupt or unnatural after painting in the effect with the Brush Tool. If this is the case, you could take a different approach with the Brush. First of all, undo any work you did by painting on the mask with the brush. Then, lower the opacity of the brush by using the Opacity setting in the Options Bar above the main image window. I like to move it down to 20 or 30%.

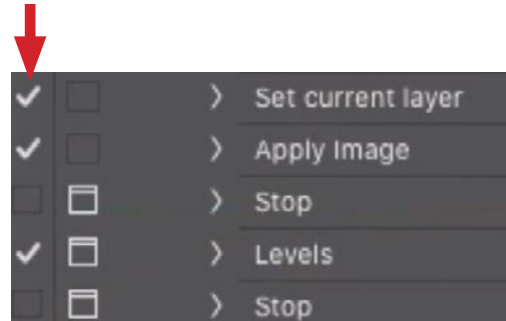
Now that the brush opacity is lower, you can paint in the effect gradually. Every time you release your mouse button and then click to paint again, the effect will build up. This not only allows you to build the effect gradually, but you can also make the brush smaller and paint in the middle, or shiniest, area because this area might need more correction than the rest of the shiny spot.



In the before/after views at left, I felt that the result looked too unnatural. I therefore re-applied the brush strokes, with the brush set to a lower opacity (shown at right).

Add Instructions to the Action (16:43)

Up until now, the action has been running without providing instructions on what to do when each dialog opens. It just expects you to know what to do when the Levels dialog or the Color Picker pops up. This is fine if the action is fresh in your mind, but if you're not using it all the time, it can be easy to forget what to do at each stage.



If the step has a check mark, it will be played in the action.

Now let's change the action a bit so that it actually provides instructions on how to use these features in the various steps of the action.

In the Actions Panel, expand the "Fix Shiny Area" action by clicking on the little disclosure arrow to the left of the action name. Once expanded, it will show you all of the steps that are contained within the action. You will find that there are little check boxes to the left of many action steps. When a box is checked, it is telling Photoshop to apply that step when the action is run. If the check box is empty, that particular step will be skipped when the action is run.



This is an example of the instructions that will pop up on the "Stop" steps in the action.

In this action, it is skipping any step that is called a "Stop." A Stop is a step that provides instructions. Click these check boxes to turn on those steps. You can then collapse the action again, if you don't want to see all of the individual steps.

Now, when you run the action, it will stop and give you instructions at each stage that requires some input from you. After you have read the instructions, click the Continue button in order to proceed with the action.