

How to Preserve Old Photos Using Photoshop

OLD PHOTOS

We all have that box of photos that we need to scan and restore. It can be a daunting task. This procedural manual will demystify the process. Once scanned, you will learn how you can use some basic filters in Photoshop to clean up your photos.

WHO IS THIS MANUAL FOR?

This procedure is for those family archivists, crafts people, and lovers of history. This is a basic primer for getting started.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- A Scanner or scanning service to digitize your photos
- Photoshop or Photoshop Elements
- A back up drive
- CDs/DVDs or a Cloud Service

GETTING STARTED

If you are going to scan the photos yourself. Your scanner may have some correction features but Photoshop will give you much more control.

1. Work with your scanners recommendations and instructions to scan your photos into a central folder either in your photos folder or on your desktop.
2. Scan all photos.
3. Back up folder of raw untouched photos to your backup drive. It is a good best practice to save often.

If you have a service like Costco scan your photos you may proceed to the next step.

Note: Don't panic. If you have images that have lost color, you may be able to retrieve this in Photoshop. Photos with small tears can be fixed as well. Determine your perfection level at the beginning of your project.

USING PHOTOSHOP

Now that you have all of your photos scanned in, and backed up you can now start to clean them up. Photoshop or Photoshop Elements has some really great tools to help you.

1. Make a new folder on your desktop or in your photos folder. You will be saving your retouched photos into this folder.
2. Open Photoshop and open your first photo.
3. From Image pull-down on your top navigation **Select Auto-Tone.**
4. From Image pull-down on your top navigation **Select Auto-Contrast.**
5. From Image pull-down on your top navigation **Select Auto-Color.**
6. **Save the image.**

These three selections will start the process for all of your subsequent photos. In addition, there are tools that will let you crop, heal and rubberstamp giving even more detail to your images.



This is the cropping tool. From here you can crop your photos for better focus on your subjects or cut Uncle Harry out of the family portrait.



This tool will help you to "Heal parts of your images that are a problem. You can use this to repair tears to a certain point or get rid of blemishes or marks on the photo. Use a small brush and take your time and it will look very natural.



The rubberstamp tool lets you grab parts of the image to fix larger portions of the photo. This is one tool to use very sparingly and with again a very small area brush. There are many more tools to help you along the way, but these will give you great results in a short amount of time.

After each step **Save** your images. Photoshop has a history palette that lets you go back one or two steps or to when you last opened the image. You will judge just how much you want to tinker with each of your photos.

CONCLUSION

With these simple steps you will have your old images out of the shoebox and into your computer. You can then preserve your family memories for generations to come. Remember to save often as this simple act will help you down the road. Your final step is to make sure that your backup all of your hard work. Services like iCloud, Shutterfly¹, Picasa² and others are great places to archive your newly restored photos. Redundancy is your friend.

For more information on Photoshop and how to use more advanced tools got to: tv.adobe.com

¹Shutterfly.com

²Picasa.com