

Nik Collection Is Back WooHoo or Ho-Hum?

The Woodlands Camera Club
Processing Your Photos SIG
June 18, 2018

WooHoo

Fully compatible with latest Adobe Products including Creative Cloud, Photoshop CC, Lightroom Classic CC, and Photoshop Elements

Fully compatible with latest Mac OS and Windows

Selective brush tool is now fully functional when launching Nik tools from Photoshop

All 7 tools have been updated and are still in the collection - Analog Efex Pro, Color Efex Pro, dFine, HDR Efex Pro, Sharpener Pro, Silver Efex Pro, and Viveza

Performance has been improved - faster to launch and show changes made

Auto Updater program included - more updates or tools coming?

Ho-Hum

No significant tool updates - they look and act just like the old versions

Tools have same version numbers as old; can't tell they've been updated until you open it

Inconsistent shortcuts between tools have not been standardized (e.g., showing area affected by control point)

It's no longer free - the normal price is now \$69.99 (It's on sale until July 1 for \$49.99), but that's just \$10 per tool and they can be installed on 3 computers

The Bottom Line

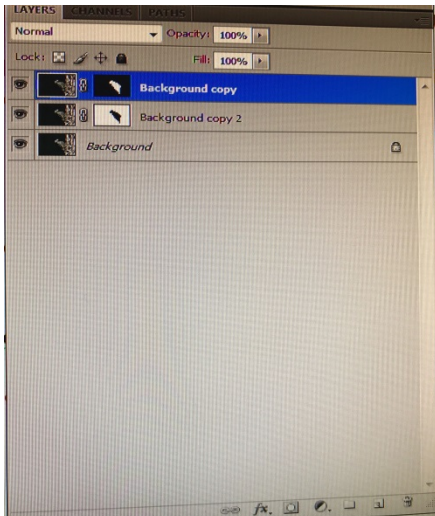
If you like the Nik Collection and use it, you should seriously consider buying the new version - it will live a lot longer than the older version

If you like the Nik Collection but seldom use it, waiting to see what comes next is a possibility - you will pay \$20 more after July 1, but may get several more months out of the old tools before compatibility issues become too difficult

DxO (owner of the Nik Collection) recently filed for bankruptcy reorganization - don't know how that will affect future releases/updates

Using Neat Image Plug-in for Photoshop

1. First thing is to download profiles for your cameras. <https://ni.neatvideo.com/download/noise-profiles> . You can also make profiles for your camera as described in the Neat Image Documentation.
2. Open the image in Photoshop and duplicate the layer. On the top layer select the subject using whatever selection tool you're happy with.
3. Create a mask with this selection (3rd icon from the left at the bottom of the layers palette). Duplicate this layer and select this layer mask and invert it (Ctrl I) this will give you 3 layers as below. If you don't keep the original image at the bottom of the layer stack you will get a white border around the subject due to the differences between the two selections.



4. Select the top layer mask (the subject), click on **Filter** tab in PS and select **Neat Image**. Once the Neat Image plug-in screen comes up, select **Auto Match** and it should load the profile for the camera and iso that was used. Then select **Auto Fine Tune** (If you hit F5 key it will Auto Match and Auto Fine-Tune for you). Check the **Quality** measurement on right side of screen. It should be higher than 80%, if not try **Auto Profile** tab on the top left. If you have to increase the noise selection box click the **Auto Profile** tab again. Select the **Noise Filter Settings** tab at the top and ensure **Quality Mode** is set to **Highest**. A good place to start with the sliders is as follows (this layer will have lower noise reduction to retain as much detail as possible).
 - **Luminance** - set at 40%
 - **Chrominance** – Cr set at 100%. Cb set at 80%
 - **Frequencies** – High, Mid, low, Very Low, and Ultra Low set at 100%
 - **Noise Level** – 0%
 - **Artifact Removal** – check Enable
 - **Detail Recovery** – check Enable, Sensitivity set to 0%, Amount set to 100%
 - **Edge Smoothing** – Do not Enable
 - **Sharpening** – Do not Enable
5. Select the second layer mask (the background), click on **Filter** tab in PS and select **Neat Image**. You have already set the filter profile in the previous step, so select the **Noise Filter Settings** tab. A good place to start with the sliders is as follows (this layer will have lower noise reduction to retain as much detail as possible).
 - **Luminance** - set at 90%
 - **Chrominance** – Cr set at 100%. Cb set at 80%
 - **Frequencies** – High, Mid, low, Very Low, and Ultra Low set at 100%
 - **Noise Level** – 0%
 - **Artifact Removal** – check Enable
 - **Detail Recovery** – check Enable, Sensitivity set to 0%, Amount set to 100%
 - **Edge Smoothing** – Do not Enable
 - **Sharpening** – Do not EnableAfter the filter has run, check the background for additional noise or artifacts. If needed go back and increase the **Noise Level** settings to try and remove the noise (I start at 60% with luminance, Cr, and Cb sliders set at around 80%).
6. Then flatten the image and run the action for resize, enhance and sharpen at the size of your choice.

Safeguarding Your Precious Images

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Post-Processing SIG
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Topics

Reality

Principles

Practice

Examples

Make a Plan

Reality

Your images are REALLY important to you

All storage media eventually fail

Example: consumer grade hard drives*

1 in 14 fail in first 1.5 years

1 in 50 fail in next 1.5 years

1 in 8 fail per year after that ⇒ **50% fail within 6 years**

Human error can cause data loss

Imperfect software and operating systems can cause data loss

You can't buy insurance for lost images - well maybe, but does that \$\$\$ replace them?

*SSD's last a lot longer, but are more expensive

Principles

3-2-1 Principle (basic strategy)

3 - Keep three copies

2 - In at least two “places” (some say “media types”)

1 - One of which is offsite

Back up what you can't replace: images, sidecar files, catalogs, presets

Replace HDD's after 3-4 years

Tailor your backup strategy to the importance of your assets (time-sensitive, commercial, portfolio)

More reliability, resilience as needed (enterprise quality HDD's, SSD's, RAID 1 configuration, etc)

Here is one link for advanced backup strategy: [https://
photographylife.com/photography-backup-workflow](https://photographylife.com/photography-backup-workflow)

Practice

Primary Backup

Back Up NOW

Primary storage can be your internal HDD/SSD or an external HDD/SSD

For primary backup, use another external hard drive that is 2x your primary storage

Primary: 1TB Internal ⇒ 2TB Backup drive

Software

Windows: Microsoft Backup and Restore (with encryption)

Mac: Time Machine (with encryption)

Many more backup/sync apps

Backup everything on your primary storage

Set on automatic, go have a coffee

Practice

Offsite Storage

HDD

Alternate 2 Primary Backup HDD's

Rotate to a safe location, such as relative's house or safe deposit box

Make sure EACH HDD is a FULL BACKUP

Cloud Storage

Google Photos, Amazon Prime Photos, iCloud etc

Variety of plans, limits, limitations, structure

Designed for sharing, viewing, online access

True Backup Services

Carbonite, Backblaze, CrashPlan

Upload bandwidth limits can extend initial backup into MONTHS!

Examples

Person A

Primary Storage

3TB Fusion Drive (iMac)

1.2 TB Pictures

0.5 TB Other

Local Backup

4TB WD MyBook using Time Machine (all data)

Offsite Backup

Backblaze Cloud

Phased Backup - Pictures first, then Other

Other (mobile copy)

4TB WD MyPassport using DropSync 3 (Pictures only)

Examples

Person B

Primary Storage

1.1TB Fusion (SSD/HD Hybrid) - MacMini - All data

4TB WD MyBook external HD - 3.2TB All photos and catalogs

Local Backup

6TB WD MyBook external HD - TimeMachine - 4.9TB used

Full incremental backup of both internal and external drives

Offsite Backup

Carbonite - cloud backup of internal (data) drive

Testing backup of current year photo data from external drive (slow upload)

DropSync 3TB WD MyPassport portable HD sync backup of external photos HD

Two different drives (white and red)

Alternate copies in safe deposit box every 1-3 months
(Chase offers free safe deposit box for veterans)

Examples

Person C

Primary Storage

4TB external desktop HDD containing Master Catalog, all Photos and a few miscellaneous documents; nothing critically important is stored on internal 1TB HDD (7 years old); Time Machine currently used only for internal HDD backup

iPhone photos are added to LRCC for automatic syncing to LR Classic for storage and backup

Local Backup

4TB portable HDD using DropSync to copy/sync Master Catalog and all Photos - connect also to laptop to view catalog and photos

Offsite Backup

BackBlaze cloud storage for all files on desktop internal and external HDDs including catalog and photos

Dropbox cloud storage for transferring files from desktop to laptop and to others

Make a Plan

GET STARTED NOW

Priorities

Make a copy of all images and catalogs on a separate hard drive (did I say NOW?)

Start a regular, automated backup routine

Make a second (offsite) copy OR start a cloud service

✦ Make a third copy and start a swap schedule

Plan/budget to replace media in 3 to 5 years