

**"REMOVING BRIGHT FRINGING IN PHOTOSHOP" BY MICHAEL SMYTH**

*This tutorial demonstrates a method of removing unsightly bright edges around image elements on photographs that have been extensively edited in Photoshop.*

Often, after spending a lot of time refining and polishing an image in Photoshop you can end up with some rather nasty bright lines or fringes around contrasting edges of image elements. Here is my method of removing these edges.

**GETTING THE PROCESSING OPTIMISED IN RAW – AVOIDING SOURCES OF FRINGING**

Before we take our image into Photoshop for fine tuning and detailed enhancement, it is important to get the basic processing steps in order and optimised in Lightroom and/or Camera Raw.

These notes are not intended to be an overall discussion of image editing techniques and processes, a revised tutorial called *"Image Processing A-Z"* is being prepared for upload shortly that will cover the full workflow. These notes are designed specifically to resolve the issue of *"Fringing"*

**Basic Image adjustments to consider:**

Over use of *Clarity* in the Basic panel will result in halos around the edges of tones. This is because the Clarity tool works very much like the *"High Pass"* filter in Photoshop. Clarity adds local contrast to your image data, looking for edges of tones and increasing the contrast around these edges. Too much Clarity will start to show in light lines along the lighter edges (usually the boundary between the sky and the ground elements in a landscape image). Normally a Clarity amount of 20 -30 is useful in the processing of an image, but it depends on the overall contrast in the image – low contrast images can stand a little more. Adjust to taste and generally avoid amounts in excess of 30.

**Detail Adjustments to consider:**

All images need *sharpening* applied in the RAW processing stage. Lightroom and Camera Raw are *"Parametric"* tools, that is they alter the way the RAW image data is handled in the process of conversion to a pixel based image. It is always better to apply the appropriate amount of sharpening in RAW before creating a pixel file for editing in Photoshop. Sharpening later in Photoshop is less effective.

The amount of sharpening applied to your image will depend on several factors: The image content, the camera and sensor type and the aesthetic qualities of the image content. Newer model cameras that do not have an anti-aliasing filter need much less sharpening than those with an anti-aliasing filter. You will need to do some tests to see what is the optimum setting for your camera.

*Normally the "golden rule" of sharpening is to use either a large amount with a low radius, or a large radius with a low amount, but NEVER a large amount with a large radius.*

For most images where fine detail is required, such as landscapes, use a radius of 1 pixel (or less), with an amount of 50 (or less) and a detail setting of 75-90, **with appropriate masking applied** (remember to hold down the Alt ( Mac: Option) key when adjusting. Make sure there is no sharpening applied in areas of plain sky or no detail.

For images with less need to critical detail extraction, use a much lower Detail setting and appropriate masking.

**Lens Corrections to consider:**

Lastly, always use the *Lens Correction* tool to remove any artefacts inherent in your lens design. Sometimes you may not need to correct the distortions, but you should always use the "Color" tab and remove any chromatic aberrations. These will become visible with later processing.

## PROCESSING AND ENHANCEMENT IN PHOTOSHOP

Once you have processed the RAW file you will most likely want to carry out some further work in Photoshop. Below is an example of a finished image that has had some third party filters applied. Several filters were used in the refinement of this image.



**Above:** Here is my image of the crashed DC3 on Iceland's South coast. This is the finished image.



**Above:** Detail of the processed RAW file



**Above:** Detail of the Photoshop file after processing  
Note the bright fringe around the top

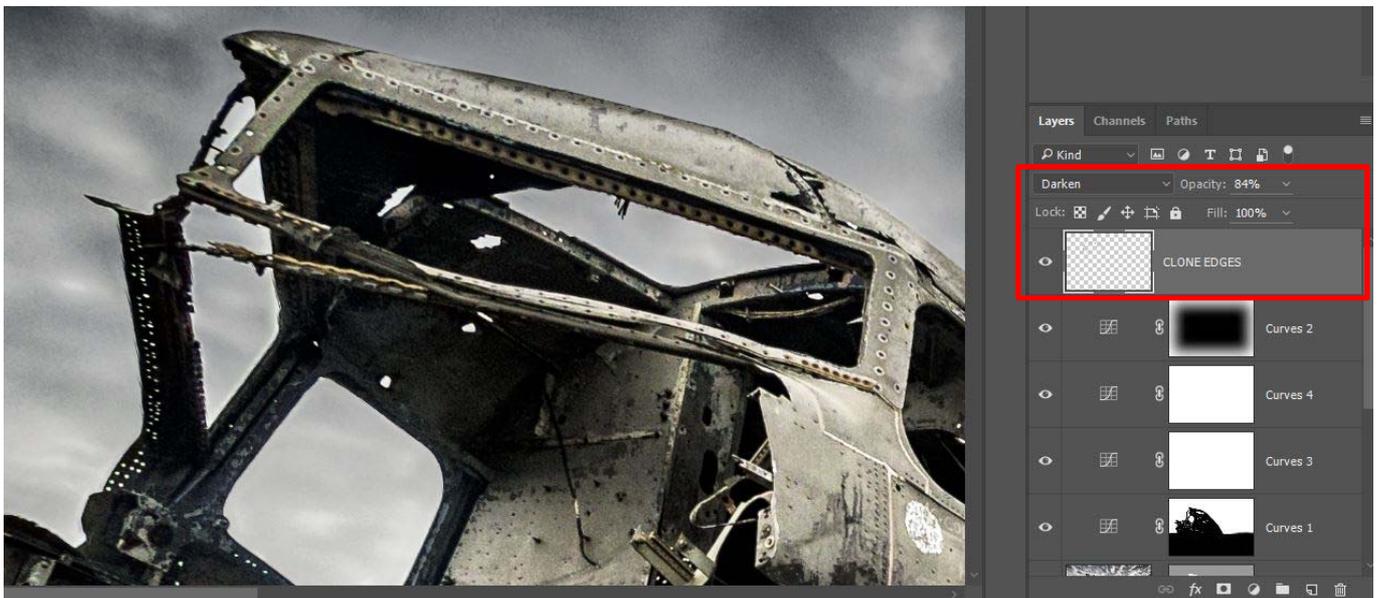
After application of filters and adjustment layers to bring out the detail and texture in the sky, there are some nasty looking edges visible.

## THE SOLUTION TO THE FRINGING ISSUE !

Using any third party plug in filters, such as NIK by Google, On1 and others will often add some strong detail extraction and contrast adjustments. NIK filters automatically create a composite layer and apply the filter to that layer, leaving you the option to adjust Opacity, Blend modes and Masking to the filter to suit your needs.

Even with all of these options available, what you end up with is light banding around the edges of tones.

Fortunately, the solution is at hand. To remove these bright edges, you will need to create a new blank layer at the top of your layer stack in Photoshop. Go to the bottom of the layers palette and click on the square outlines with a corner turned – this is the Create New Layer button. Alternatively go to the top menu and choose Layer>New>Layer. Set the Blend mode for this layer to “**Darken**”.



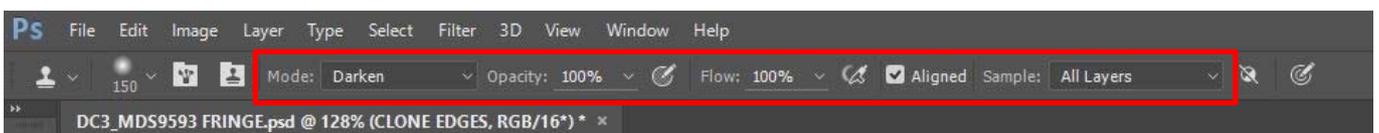
**Above:** The layers palette in Photoshop with the new layer highlighted. I have called this “Clone Edges” Note the blend mode and Opacity (here adjusted to 84%).

To remove the bright fringes, you are going to clone over the bright areas. Select the **Clone tool** and the following options:

Set the **Mode** to “**Darken**” – this is most important

Set **Opacity** to 100% Set Flow to less than 100% - you will need to experiment to find the optimum value

Set **Sample** to “All Layers”



Make sure you zoom in to at least 100% on you image and choose the smallest size clone sample that will cover your bright edge. Depending on your image, you may need to zoom in further to see the edges clearly.

Hold down the **Alt** (Mac: Option) key to set the source point and choose a sample location close to the area you want to cover. **Left mouse click** when you have selected the area you want.

Now move your mouse to cover the area with the bright fringe. Click and paint along the edge you want to remove. By the magic of Blend modes, you will see that the darker outline of the aircraft is untouched while the bright edge disappears.



**Above:** Starting to clone the edge



**Above:** the resulting cloned section.

Note that as you move around the edge of your subject, you will need to re set the source location. The source area moves relative to your clone stamp, so it will move along with you as you go. As you turn a corner your source location will need to be reset. Repeat the steps above to set the source again.

You will need to experiment with brush sizes to find one that gives invisible results, however as long as you use the **Darken Blend Mode** and your subject edge is darker than the area you want to remove, this will work every time.

When you are finished, zoom back to 50% on screen to see the results. Sometimes the cloning will look noticeable at 100%, but not at normal viewing. If necessary, adjust the **Opacity** to taste.

Remember, as you are cloning on a separate layer, if you make a mistake you can step back using the History panel, or in a worst case situation, discard the layer and start over.

Remember to save on completion and flatten all layers is you are sure you are finished.

Now you have a simple tool to control those nasty bright fringes.

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