

Enhance > Unsharp Mask

An Ancient Darkroom Technique Goes Digital!

Before starting, make sure you are viewing your image at 100% ... this allows you to see ALL pixels on screen and the effect sharpening has on them.

The Unsharp Mask Controls

The **Amount** slider controls the strength of the sharpening effect. Values of 50% to 100% are suitable for low-resolution images (those intended for web use or for email). For high-resolution images (eg; 300 ppi printing to inkjet), set the amount to between 150% to 200%.

The **Radius** slider value determines the number of pixels around the edge that is affected by the sharpening. A low value only sharpens edge pixels. Typically, you would use a setting of 1 for low-resolution images, and between 1 and 2 for high-resolution images.

The **Threshold** slider is used to determine how different pixels must be before they are considered an edge and therefore sharpened. A value of 0 will sharpen all the pixels in an image, whereas a setting of 10 will only apply the sharpening to those areas that are different by at least 10 levels or more from their surrounding pixels. I generally leave this at 0 or 1, but to ensure that there is minimal or no sharpening in areas of sky or skin tone, I might set this higher - even up to 8 and more.

Sharpening Tips ...

- When sharpening, set your image view to 100% so you can see the effect on **all** pixels
- Sharpening is set differently according to how you will use the image (for on-screen, versus a hi-res print).
- For printing, the image may appear over-sharpened on screen. This is a desired result!
- Try to avoid sharpening sky and skin tone areas by adjusting **threshold** upward from 0.