

AKVIS Noise Buster

May 1, 2008. By Nataly Tikhonovich, MyphotoSoft



Noise Buster plug-in by Akvis is a tool for reducing noise of all sorts that can appear in your photos through high digital ISO or scanning of the images. The plug-in works with a number of image editors, is easy to install and work with, and provides a quality output.

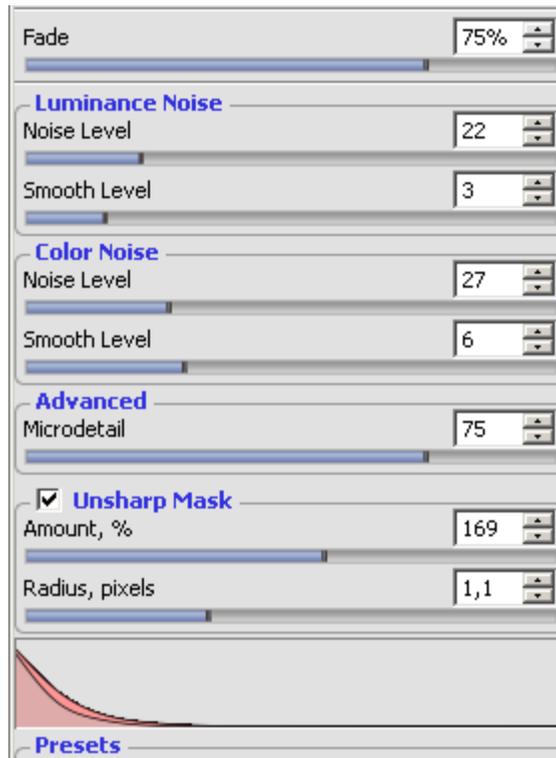
It is, indeed, a very easy to use program. The workflow is very intuitive plus every function and parameter is explained by tips that appear once you have your mouse over the item. The image is brought into the plug-in window, evaluated, and a portion of it is denoised to be shown to the user as a preview.

You can move the preview quadrangle to any part of the image to see how denoising settings could work there. Once you are satisfied, process the whole image. The program has Before and After tabs for comparison of the two states. At any point you can change the settings and apply them anew.



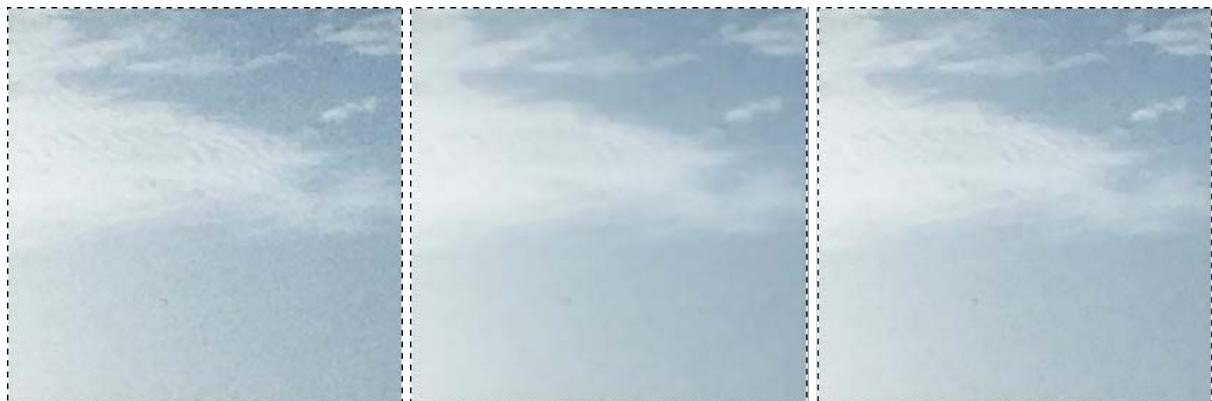
Workflow wise, Noise Buster is a one click tool, especially if you find the settings that work best for you and your images, as the program allows saving the customer settings for later use.

The parameters a few - Noise level and Smooth for both Luma and Chroma noise. And Unsharp Mask with its Radius and Amount can be set on or off.



Level and smooth parameters in both Luma and Chroma noise are rather sensitive. With the level set as low as 7-10 a couple of points in Smooth can produce considerable effect.

Yet, as in every smoothing, the reduction of noise can result in loss of detail. This dilemma is solved with Unsharp Mask.

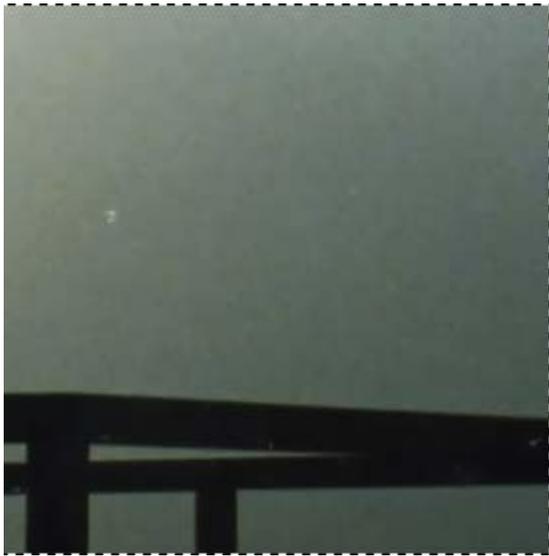


Auto

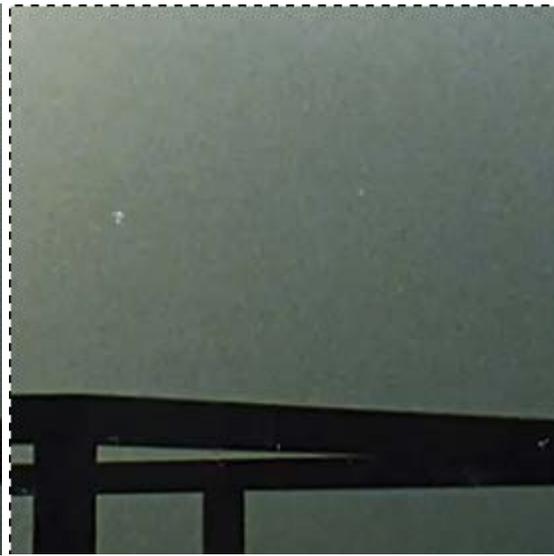
No unsharp mask

Unsharp mask applied

As you see in the fragments below Noise Buster considerably blurs the image at higher denoise settings but Masking preserves clarity and detail. On the other hand, where the image has very distinct edges Unsharp Mask can produce a slight halo.



No unsharp mask

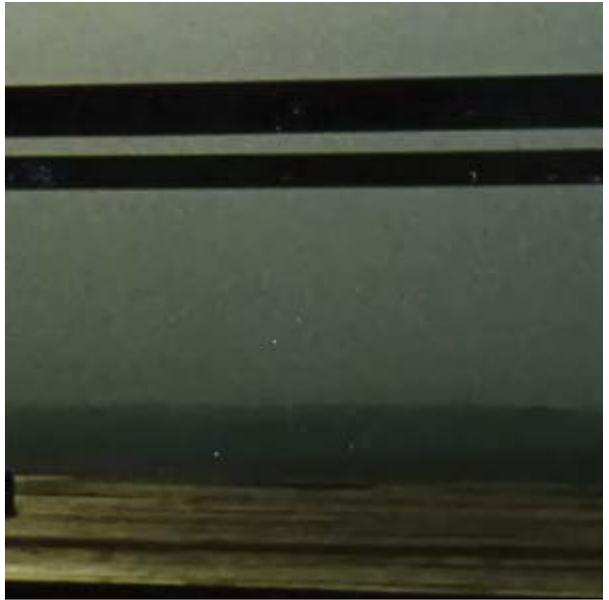
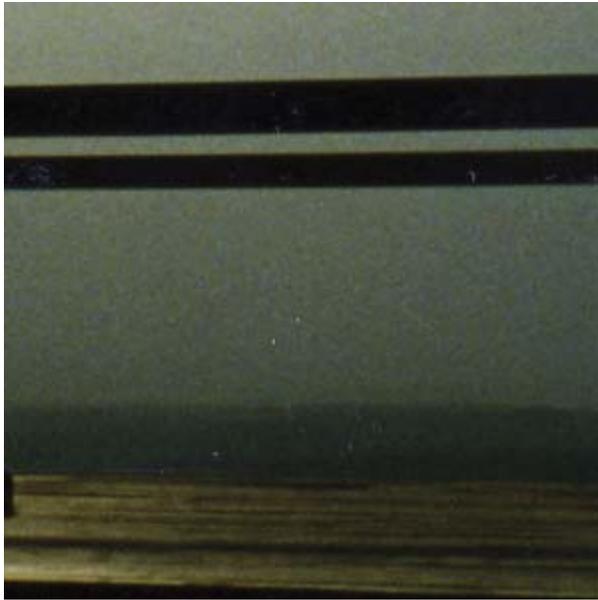


Unsharp mask

The balance of noise reduction parameters with Unsharp Mask can produce a smoothed, no noise image with all edges and important detail intact.

Below are some examples of Noise Buster application: a scan, a picture taken inside, and another outdoor lowlight image.







Yet overdone noise reduction, to the point of turning a photographic image into a painting like, is always possible:



Source image



Auto settings



Custom settings

You can buy Noise Buster at akvis.com for \$49 (Windows or Mac). A 10 day fully functional trial is available.