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AKVIS - Stamp

Reviewed by PSPUG Staff



OVERVIEW: Stamp is a plugin that allows retouching of photographs and other image imperfections. In essence it is a cloning tool but with some very different and important features. As one uses this tool the cloning effects are blended into the current background which provides a very smooth seamless outcome. There are various ways to use this tool from retouching to adding objects from one part of the photograph to another area

PROGRAM: A 10 day free trial with pdf tutorials provide ample time to evaluate the plugin. It will work with Windows 98, Me, 2000, XP, NT; Mac OS X is compatible with Adobe Photoshop, Jasc Paint Shop Pro (all) and Corel PHOTO-PAINT.

PRICE: \$49.00

WEBSITE: <http://akvis.com/en/index.php>

INSTALLATION: Easy installation into its own folder. The PDF tutorial file provides detailed information for installing and registering the plugin. The PDF tutorial also provides examples with descriptions for using the plugin to achieve particular effects.

ADVANTAGES: The ability to retouch imperfections in photographs such as wrinkles, freckles, other imperfections in a very seamless fashion is one of this plugins advantages. Also, the ability to add objects or components (such as a column as shown in one of its examples) is a very nice feature. The process is smooth and seamless. There are a number of options available for working photographs from changing the size of the selection, working with aligned or unaligned areas used in the process to an editing feature that allows larger areas to be cloned before fixing the photograph.

DISADVANTAGES: Although not a true disadvantage, I found that fixing or cloning areas worked best by doing small areas at a time rather than larger areas. Sometimes doing too much of an area would not take or produce the results on the original photograph requiring smaller areas. Also, not necessarily a disadvantage, the fact that cloning in areas blends into the background, if one wants to make a uniform background over lighter areas this process is difficult to achieve as the result blends into the background colors.

REVIEWER COMMENTS: Once I learned how to use this plugin, I found it very helpful in retouching photographs of people. Working in a zoomed image and using a small sized selections allowed very nice retouching. This plugin is not one that would be used to quickly fix a very poor image but taking the time allows for a very effective outcome (I retouched a very poor image of my mother removing her freckles and wrinkles).

In areas where one wants details to remain, the process must be very precise so those areas do not get blended into the seamless feature of cloning and retouching.

Adding objects is a very neat feature and once one is familiar with how to use strokes and areas for such cloning the results are excellent because of the blending of the edges into the background.

OTHER MEMBER REVIEWS: This has a very clean effect on the image. It would be nice if you could clone one picture & put it on another one. However, this plugin does a great job. I also noticed that it fades on the top edge so it looks more original and blends in more than most cloning/stamp plugins. I also like the ability to release the mouse and it will go back to the starting point, then you can continue on with the same material or starting point that you used in the beginning. I also like the ability to change the size of the brush when stamping so you can be more exact.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Retouching photographs is often a very slow and tedious process. This plugin provides a tool for a more smooth and seamless way to retouch. Enhancing photographs by adding objects is also a very smooth and effective aspect of this plugin.

<http://www.pspug.org/reviews/stamp/rev-stamp.shtml>