

# Photoshop Actions

## 1. What are Actions

**In the Simplest terms** - Actions are Shortcuts, a ***One - Click Editing Process***

**Technically** - Actions are a series of recorded steps that are created to help you edit your image without having to do each step manually

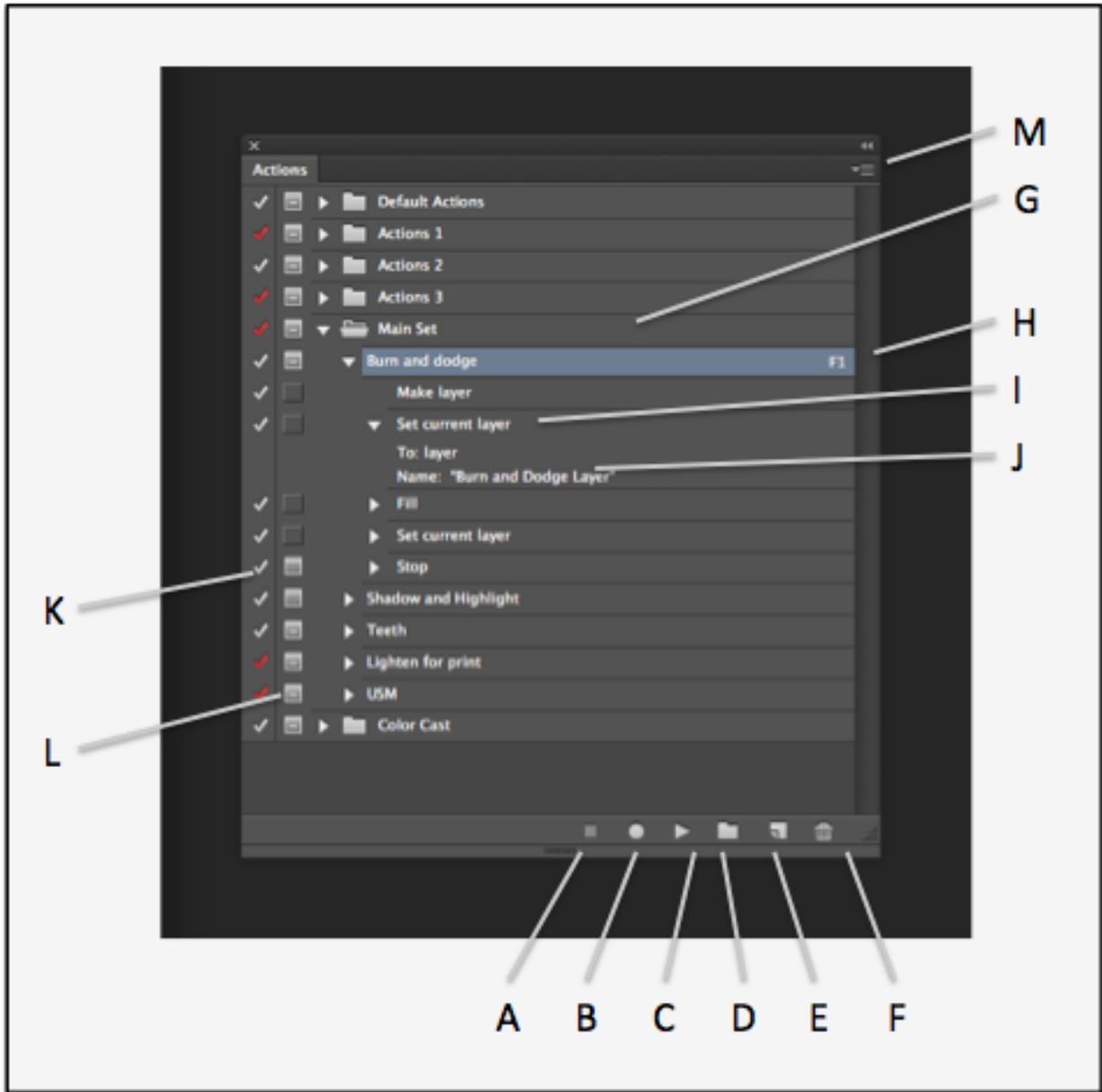
## 2. Common Uses for Actions

Although actions can be used to automate all sorts of tasks, some common uses include:

- Creating a Black and White Conversion
- Creating a Dodge and Burn Layer
- Sepia toning
- Sharpening
- Saving jpgs of various resolutions (for competition, for web site, etc.)

## 3. Using Actions - The Action Panel

The Actions panel allows you to create (record), edit, load, save, delete and play actions. To show or hide the Actions panel, use the Window » Show Actions command or press the F9 key.



**A. STOP PLAYING/RECORDING**

The Stop button stops action playback and recording. You can also stop recording by choosing Stop Recording from the Actions panel menu.

**B. BEGIN RECORDING**

Click the RECORD Button to begin Recording a new action or add additional commands to an existing action

**C. PLAY SELECTION**

If ACTION is selected, clicking PLAY button executes the entire action. If a specific step within an Action is selected, double clicking on that step will just execute that step.

**D. CREATE NEW SET**

Will create a new Set of Actions

**E. CREATE NEW ACTION**

Will create a new Action to the selection Set of Actions.

**F. DELETE**

Will Delete Actions, steps or Action Steps - cannot be undone and not added to the History

**G. ACTION SETS**

Behaves like Folders (of Actions), you can organize your Actions using Action Sets.

**H. ACTIONS**

Contains one or more pre-recorded steps. Double click on an Action to change it's name .

**I. ACTION STEPS**

Listing of each step recorded for the Action.

**J. COMMAND DETAILS**

Provides any detail settings that were recorded for specified action step.

**K. MODAL CONTROLS**

Used to enable/disable a commands dialog - only available for commands that have a dialog.

**L. INCLUDE CHECKBOXES**

Turns specific commands on/off or complete actions or sets on or off.

**M. ACTION PANEL MENU**

Contains several commands useful for viewing Actions, Saving/Loading Actions, Inserting stops within an action, etc

## **Creating Actions**

Let's Look at Action Limitations:

Photoshop doesn't let you record everything you might want. While Photoshop can record blend modes, opacity, shapes, brush selections, and even pixel selections, you still cannot record paint strokes (like those made with the Brush, Airbrush, and Clone tools), zooms, switching windows, and scrolls.

Keep in mind: Don't try something that is very difficult - Keep your actions simple.

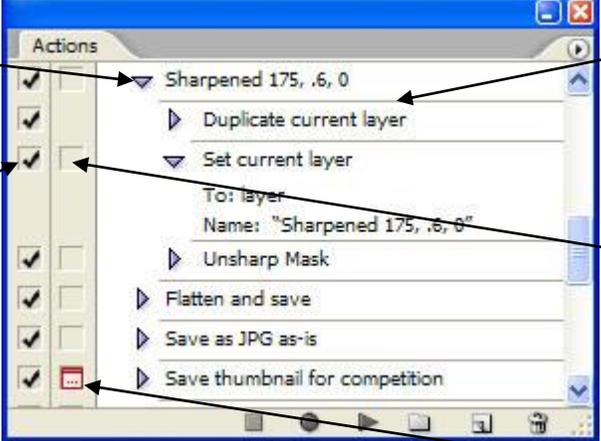
Creating an action:

1. Make sure the Actions palette is displayed. If not, select Window/Actions from the menu.
2. Click on the "Create New Action" icon at the bottom of the palette.
3. In the New Action dialog box, type in a descriptive name in the first field and press the Record button.
4. From now until you click on the Stop Recording icon, everything you do in Photoshop will be recorded as part of the new action.
5. Do all the steps you want to do in your action and then click on the Stop Recording icon at the bottom of the Actions palette.

### **Action Sets**

- You can create and organize sets of task-related actions to make them easier to find. These sets can then also be saved and transferred to another computer
- To create an action in a set, when you click the "Create New Action" icon, enter the name and then select the set in which you want the action to reside
- If you want to move the action to another set, select and drag the action to the appropriate set
- Saving a set of actions for transfer:
  - Select a set by highlighting it
  - Using the Action Palette Pull Down Menu (upper right corner of Actions palette) choose Save Actions
  - Name the set, choose a location and then click Save.
  - Copy the saved set to another computer.
  - In Photoshop, select Load Actions from the Action Palette Pull Down Menu
  - Find and select your saved actions file

If you haven't used an action for a while, you may not remember everything it does. To review what an action is doing, you can see the details by clicking on the blue triangle to the left of the action name. (See below) You may see indented steps with more blue triangles. You can click on each triangle to see further details of the action.



The screenshot shows the Photoshop Actions palette with the following callouts:

- Expand an action by clicking the blue triangle next to the name.** (Points to the blue triangle next to "Sharpened 175, .6, 0")
- Expanded Action – let's you see what it is doing.** (Points to the expanded list of steps: Duplicate current layer, Set current layer, Unsharp Mask, Flatten and save, Save as JPG as-is, Save thumbnail for competition)
- Individual steps can be skipped by unchecking the step.** (Points to the checkboxes on the left of the steps)
- You can force a dialog box to come up while running an action by clicking in this box next to the appropriate step before running it. If you click it, it will display a red icon like this.** (Points to the red icon next to "Save thumbnail for competition")

It is possible to perform just one step in an action. Expand the action so you can see the steps. Then hold the CTRL key and double click on the step you want to perform.

To change one step in an existing action, double click on the step (without the CTRL key).

### **Save Actions**

Although the contents of the Actions panel are remembered from one session to the next, they're not actually saved until you physically save them using the Save Actions command.

Individual actions cannot be saved, only sets. If you want to save a single action, it must be placed into its own set. The best place to save your actions is in the Adobe Photoshop CS#\Presets\Actions\ folder (or subfolder).

### **Load Actions**

Load Actions allows you to load an existing action set. You can also load actions by choosing them (by name) from the bottom of the panel menu, by double-clicking on them in Explorer/Finder, or by dragging and dropping them onto the Photoshop application window.