

Akvis Retoucher 1.3 by Akvis LLC

reviewed by Ken Herbig

We all have old photos of family, pets and vacations that we would love to preserve. They sit in albums, envelopes and are even laying loose in draws getting scratched, creased and accumulating dirt. Don't think that they are lost for ever, there is help waiting out there—**Akvis Retoucher 1.3**

I haven't used many third party plug-ins with my graphics programs, so when I received the request to review Retoucher, I thought I would give it a try.

Installation was quite straightforward. **Retoucher** is compatible with *Adobe Photoshop*, *Photoshop Elements*, *Jasc Paint Shop Pro* and *Corel Photo-Paint* and other digital imaging software that support third-party plug-ins. I used the program in *Paint Shop Pro 8.1* for this review. I used a digital image that was scanned from a 35mm slide at 2400 dpi for my test photo. The photo, like many old photos, showed an abundance of scratches, spots and specks.

I opened the photo and clicked the "Selection" tool on my toolbar, opened the tool options and for "selection type" and chose the round option. I then proceeded to begin selecting all the spots and specks in the photo. I even used the freehand tool to remove a couple of long scratches. After making all the selections I went to the "Effects" dropdown menu, went into "Plug-ins" and



selected Akvis / Retoucher. When the program starts it displays the photo and now comes the hard part...You click on the Green Arrow. That is all there was to it. Really, I couldn't believe how simple and user- friendly the program was. I normally spend hours using the clone tool and paint brush tools to do what I accomplished using **Retoucher** in about 30 minutes. I then cropped the photo and printed it, framed it and gave it as a gift.

The Help Menu (F1) was easy to use and very informative. It showed in detail how to use the plug-in.

I recommend this program to both amateurs and professionals who want to retouch or restore old photos. There is a 10-day trial version available for you to download at <http://akvis.com>.

Akvis Retoucher 1.3, \$87.00

System Requirements:

Windows 98, Me, 2000 or XP

Pentium II 233 MHz or above

Minimum 96 MB RAM

Minimum of 5 MB HD space required.

BUSTING PC MYTHS: *"Turning off your PC daily to save power shortens its life."*

HERE'S A TOPIC THAT PROVOKES DEBATE. One side argues that turning the PC on and off stresses components. The other side says it's a good thing; even the best programs and the OS can get cranky without occasional shutdowns.

There's no definitive answer. Most authorities, however, lean toward the idea that shutting off does more good than harm--plus it saves power. Kevin Krewell, editor in chief of the *Microprocessor Report*, supports that side of the debate. "Processors typically have a ten-year life span," he says, so a PC will be dead weight before switching it on and off could affect the CPU.

Tip: If you're using Windows XP, right-click the desktop, choose New, Shortcut, type "shutdown -s -t 00", click Next, give the shortcut a name (for example, Shutdown), and click Finish. Next time you need to shut down, click the shortcut icon.