

AKVIS Noise Buster Software Version 5.0, \$49.00

Review by Barbara Hansen, GGCS

Version 5.0 is available as a standalone application and as a plug-in for Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, and other major programs and runs on Mac OS 10 and MS Vista. New to version 5 is an improved algorithm and a histogram which displays the amount and type of noise in a photo.

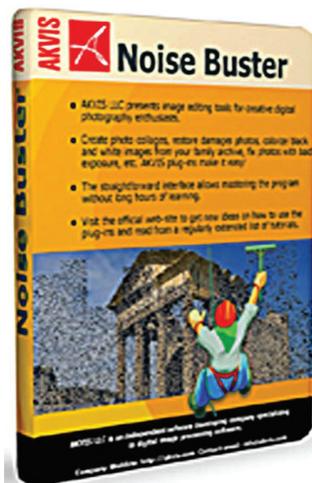
Every one who uses a digital camera comes up with the problem of “noise”, especially when taking pictures in low light, at high ISO levels, or at long optical distances. There are two kinds of noise: luminance, the black grainy dots and color red and blue dots. These fine dots appear most obviously in sky and on portrait complexions.

Noise Buster is a little program with a very complicated algorithm and a simple interface to remove or smooth over these dots in the photo without losing detail. In fact, when you open a photograph in the program, it automatically goes ahead and treats the noise and shows a before and after view.

If you like the effect you save it, or you can make additional adjustments. Several sliders are available to increase the effect on both types of noise and sharpen the edges if you feel detail has been lost. Or you can fade the effect. You can then save your adjustments and apply them in batch mode in Photoshop.

Using a very mottled complexion on one of my dark portraits, I compared Noise Buster to Photoshop’s CS3 noise reduction program in Bridge and to Neat Image, a program which I had liked in the past. In both cases Noise Buster was simpler to use and produced a better and smoother complexion, although the results were slightly plastic looking. I probably overdid it a bit, but it was a better solution than I was able to accomplish with the other programs.

A murky herringbone or crosshatched or dotted pattern may appear in scanned images from printed material. This interference is called a moiré pattern, caused by interference between two sets of fine pattern grids, the scanner samples and the halftone screen in the original image. Any scanner will do this. Noise Buster can also remove moiré patterns on photographs that have been scanned. I was really impressed with this great little program for an extra tool for improving your photos.



ProShow Producer

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time line. You can set the resolution of the show to whatever you want. The program supports many formats. I found the program very powerful and easy to use. I am still working with ProShow Producer and learning something new all the time.

After you have created your show you can send it to friends and family to play on their TV or computer. ProShow Producer as reviewed \$249.95. Photodex makes a lighter version. ProShow Gold sells for \$69.95. Both versions can be down loaded off their web site for a free 15 day trial. <http://www.photodex.com/products>

