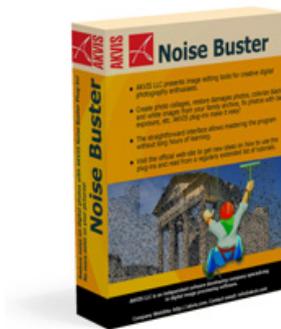# AKVIS Noise Buster V.1.1

Posted in Software by simonelange on the October 6th, 2006

Product Review

Product: AKVIS Noise Buster V.1.1
Company:
Contact: 206-309-0821
Price: $49.00
Pros: Great Noise Buster
Cons: A little pricey for one filter

Product Rating

Impressive

by Simone Lange, AAUG Member

AKVIS Noise Buster is a cross platform noise reduction filter. This filter is supported by many of the applications that we use for photo enhancement programs ex: PhotoShop, Corel, & Paint Shop Pro.

AKVIS is installed under your filters menu for your respective program. The application that I use is PhotoShop so I accessed my filters like I normally would.

The filter opens a window with your image on the left and the selection menu on the right. Sometimes the filter gets kind of sticky, and will take a while to load if that happens just close it out and re-open the filter.

AKVIS reduces both luminance and color noise on digital images. No matter the cost of the digital camera many of us have encountered noise on our photos.

While working in the AKVIS window there are two tabs on the top of the image the before and after tabs that you can toggle back and forth to see the changes in your image. There are six other buttons located at the top right side of the screen. One is a green button that looks like the "Play" button on any media device. It allows you to test drive the changes on the entire image, if you don't like the changes just go back and make adjustments. If you like the changes then hit the other green check mark button and it makes the changes to your image and closes out the filter. The next button which is an "I" gives you info about the program. The help button or "?" mark gives you the mini-tuturial about the program. Then you have "EN" which allows you to choose which language you would like to use and the "Red" button which kind of looks like a bullseye which closes the program without applying any changes to your image.

Under those buttons you have a small preview window where you can see your entire image. There is also a slider that allows you to zoom in on selected portions of your image. Under that is the "Automatic Filtering" button that will extrapolate your image for you and lets the computer decide what it thinks is the best result. You can tweak the image from there if you are not satisfied with what the computer has decided.

You can adjust the following:

Fade - Allows you to mix the filtered image with the original image. At 100% everything that you defined as noise will be smoothed out according to what you have the "Smooth Level" set to. The closer to zero you go more of the original image will be mixed in with the filtered image. You do need a certain amount of noise in your photo to give it a natural look. However using the filter at its highest settings is great for removing the Moire pattern that comes from scanning an image.

Luminance Noise - There are two elements of control under this choice, you can set the Noise Level and the Smooth Level. The Noise Level is where you make your definition of what you consider noise. The higher you go on your setting the more the small details will be smoothed. Meaning if you go to high you may just smooth out more than you wanted to. The Smooth Level works in conjunction with the Noise Level setting if your setting is to high it can make your image appear flat and lose too much detail so use a light hand remember you can always add more if you need it.

Color Noise - We have all seen some varation of color noise in our digital images. The Noise Level defines what we consider color noise and what we would like to keep in the photo. If we set the parameters high we can smooth out small color noise. While with the Smooth Level the higher the setting the smoother the filtration, however if we go to high on this level we can cause actual color and loss of small details so remember to strike that balance between too much and not enough.

Advanced - Blur and Sharpen Edges are your next choices. You can Blur the entire image which works great for portrait work when you want the skin to appear smooth. A small amount of it on different types of images are acceptable. Whereas the Sharpen Edges can bring back minor details that may have been lost when applying this filter. Be careful when using this controller because you may re-introduce some of the noise that you worked hard to remove.

Fine tuning this filter becomes a matter of personal choice. Some people want the image razor sharp while others don't mind having the image softened somewhat which is what this filter does to some extent.

I used the filter on a picture of my son and his friends at graduation that was taken on a lower end digital camera. The image appeared over sharpened from the get go and there was lots of noise even on a sunny day. I just used the "Automatic Filtering" with minute tweaks and it worked great to smooth out the skin tones and take down some of the sharpness and noise.

The filter is pretty easy to use. I think a little pricey for one filter but it's money well spent if you want an easy to use filter.