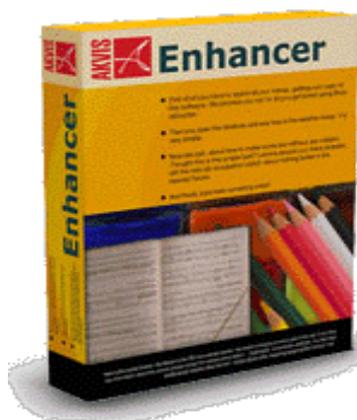




## Product Review

### Akvis Enhancer 1.1

Ken Blake, TCS Member



According to its web site, "Akvis Enhancer is an image enhancement software for revealing details on a picture. Enhancer allows detecting details from underexposed, overexposed and mid tone areas of a photo without manipulating exposure.

"The tool is useful in cases when a photo lacks detail.

For example, when a picture has been taken with the background overexposed and consequently the foreground is hardly discernible, which is especially annoying when you take a picture of a person; or when a photo lacks dramatic effect due to vagueness of the scene."

It's a plug-in, which easily installs into several of the popular image-editing programs, such as Adobe *Photoshop*, *Photoshop Elements*, and *Corel PhotoPaint*. I installed version 1.1 (although I see that 1.2 is now available) in *PaintShop Pro 8.10*.

### Working with Akvis Enhancer

Once installed, in *PSP*, you load the picture you want to enhance, then invoke it from *PSP* by clicking on

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Effects | Plugins | Akvis | Enhancer. It gives you three slider controls:

**Level of Detail** The Level of Detail parameter allows regulating the level of detail. It accepts values between 0 and 100. To make details more visible you should increase the value of Level of Detail"

**Highlight/Shadow priority** "The Highlight / Shadow priority parameter determines the area of the image where detail should be more visible either in shadows or in highlights.

"With the default value of 0 the program obtains details in both shadows and highlights equally well. To detect details in underexposed (dark) areas increase the parameter value. To detect details overexposed (too much light areas) decrease the value."

**Intensity** "Using the Intensity Parameter you can regulate the overall effect of both parameters (Level of Detail and Highlight / Shadow priority).

"If the Intensity parameter is equal to 0, neither of the parameters comes into play. On the contrary, if intensity is set to 100, the Level of Detail and Highlight / Shadow priority parameters are working at their maximum."

I had a recent picture I took on vacation which was badly underexposed. I loaded it into *PSP*, then to create a baseline for comparison, used *PSP*'s own enhancing ability by clicking on Enhance Photo, then One Step Photo Fix.

Although I had to make none of the individual choices which *Akvis Enhancer* requests, the result was a greatly-improved, and very decent, if not quite perfect photograph. The average person looking at it would likely have had little idea that it had started out underexposed and been enhanced by software.

"Then," I said, "now let me see what *Akvis Enhancer* can do by comparison."

So I went through many iterations of loading the picture, trying a particular *Akvis Enhancer* setting, saving it under a different name, then viewing the

result full screen.

I moved the first slider to the right and left the second alone.

I moved the first to the right and the second to the left.

I moved the first to the left and left the second alone.

I moved the first to the left and the second to the right.

I moved them both to the right, I moved them both to the left.

Then I repeated all of those with different settings of the third slider.

And what did I find? Well, some of the settings made the image better and some made it worse. But none came close to doing as good a job as *PSP's* built-in One Step Photo Fix, used without having to make any choices as to settings.

## **Conclusion**

At \$69, it's a high price for a plug-in; you can buy the whole PaintShop Pro program for not much more than that. And considering that it didn't work well at all, it's not recommended.

**About: *Akvis Enhancer Shareware***

**Site:** [Akvis LLC](#)

**Price:** \$69 USD to purchase (10 day free trial)

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