Sharpening with the High Pass Filter
Over the past weeks, we've been looking at the proper sequence to photo editing:

1. Crop, straighten and resize.
2. Correct any lighting issues (shadows, highlights, midtones).
3. Eliminate any possible color casts.
4. Adjust saturation if necessary.
5. Apply any special effects (if desired)
6. Apply sharpening, if needed

Previous tutorials:

Cropping Images: The Basics
Straightening Images: The Basics
Resizing Images: The Basics
Correcting Shadows and Highlights: The Basics
Photo Editing using Levels: the Basics
Removing Color Cast in Photoshop and Photoshop Elements
Hue Saturation Adjustment Layer: The Basics

Following the recommended photo editing sequence, today we would look at Step #5, applying special effects. Since there are so many types of special effects and because they are all personal preference, I'm going to skip that and move on to Sharpening.

There are multiple ways to sharpen images, but I'm going to show you one of my favorite ways today, that is by using the High Pass Filter. This technique works the same in Photoshop and Photoshop Elements. Today my screenshots will be from Photoshop CC 2018.

This is a photo of my grandson, Owen, being silly:
Sharpening with the High Pass Filter

HOW THE HIGH PASS FILTER WORKS:

The High Pass Filter is not really a "sharpening tool," but is a tool that finds the edges in photos. Increasing the contrast between edges gives the illusion that the image is sharper, and this is our goal.

HOW TO APPLY A HIGH PASS FILTER:
1. Duplicate your image (Control + J). Now you have 2 of the same image in your Layers Panel, one image on the layer above the other image.
2. Click on the duplicate image layer to make it the active layer.
3. Go to the top menu bar: Filter > Other > High Pass.
4. A High Pass Filter window will open, and the duplicate image in your Layers Panel will turn gray.
5. Move the slider in the options window all the way down to zero. Your image will be completely gray. Then start moving the slider to the right. When you see the edges of your image begin to appear, stop. Click OK.

6. Change the Blend Mode of the High-Pass Layer (which is your duplicate photo layer) to Overlay or Soft Light. (Soft light usually works best). 7. If the effect is too strong, reducing the opacity of the High Pass Layer can help. If it's not strong enough, you can try the Hard Light Blend Mode.

In the full version of Photoshop, if your image is a Smart Object, the High Pass Filter will be applied as a Smart Filter, allowing you to adjust the Radius further if you like. Click on the "High Pass" text under the Smart Filter icon to reopen the High Pass window.

Here are the Before and After images.
High Pass Sharpening is a quick fix for an image that needs a boost!

Thank you for downloading my tutorial! I hope you find it helpful.

Karen Schulz

SnickerdoodleDesigns