

PORTRAIT RETOUCHING IN LIGHTROOM

by **SHARK
PIXEL**

Hey everyone Kristi Sherck with Shark Pixel here, I am excited to be sharing with you my methods for retouching an image entirely in Lightroom. Doing this saves you time since you don't have to open the image in Photoshop. I don't know about you but I am always looking for ways to do a great quality job quick so you can get more done and have time for other things as well. Here is our example image before any LR adjustments.



Example image BEFORE

Let's jump right in, first switch over to the Develop Module, for the most part we will be talking about the extremely powerful Local Adjustment Brush (K), but before we get to that I would like to discuss the Spot Removal Tool (Q).



When retouching an image in Lightroom or Photoshop I like to start with blemish and fly away hair removal. For this we will use the Spot Removal tool, as you can see there are a few brush options; Size - how big or small your brush is; Feather - amount of blend or how hard or soft the edge of the brush is; Opacity - the transparency of what you clone or heal over, a cool thing about doing this kind of work in Lightroom is that each blemish or hair you remove can have its own custom opacity as you can change it for each brush stroke even after you've moved on to other areas.



Spot Removal - Clone VS Heal

To the left you can see the difference between Clone VS Heal, clone will replace the area you paint with another area, color and texture, whereas Heal will try to blend the texture from the reference area with the color from the target area. Now that we know what all of the settings mean and the difference between the Heal and Clone options in the Spot Removal tool we can go ahead and start removing blemishes and fly away hairs.

TIP~ Frequently change the brush size, using the left and right brackets [], to be only a little larger than what you are removing. Also adjust the Feather and Opacity to make sure it looks natural, not all areas will need the same treatment, so customize it!!

Lightroom does a good job on its own of finding a good reference point for each target area you paint over. If however you don't like what it selects you can click the Backslash key on your keyboard, with the point selected, and it will cycle through a few options for you. If still you are not getting good results just click and drag that reference point to an area that does look good.

TIP - You can use the H key on your keyboard to Hide and Un-Hide all of the reference and target points on the image



Show Retouching Pinpoints

Hide Retouching Pinpoints

The last thing for this tool that I want to talk about is the under eyes. Here you would use the Spot Removal tool on Clone and paint a small area under the eye. Then move the reference point to the lightest spot on the forehead. Now that's not going to look great. So next make sure you have the point under the eye selected, it will have a black dot in the center of both the target and reference points. Then you want to lower the Opacity to a natural look, somewhere in the 25 range is usually a good starting point, then make adjustments until it looks right. Next adjust the Feather until that looks natural as well. (For this image I ended up moving the reference point to the highlight on the cheek.) This is one way we can minimize under eyes in Lightroom.

TIP~ For most areas when you are using the Spot Removal tool you will be using 100% Opacity, with slightly varying Feather. But make sure when you are focusing on the under eyes you minimize and don't remove or it will look fake.



Under eye BEFORE

Under eye AFTER

Okay on to the real star of the show the Adjustment Brush. I love this tool because it gives you so much control over a very specific area. There are so many options within the Adjustment Brush, it really is an incredibly powerful tool if you know how to use it right. Hopefully by the end of this you will know a lot more about utilizing the Adjustment Brush to its fullest potential. Before you begin make sure the adjustments sliders are zeroed out, to do this double click the word "Effect" in the top left of the Adjustment Brush panel.



TIP~ The difference between a Local Adjustment and a Global Adjustment. Local Adjustments are applied only where you paint the effect with the Adjustment Brush. Global Adjustments are applied over the entire image.

The first thing to go over with the Adjustment Brush tool goes back to the mantra that ninety percent of what you do in photo editing can be accomplished by changing the pixel's color and brightness/darkness values. We did the camera left under eye with the Spot Removal tool, so now I'll walk you through how to accomplish the same results with the Adjustment Brush tool on the camera right eye. It's so important to always know multiple techniques to achieve the same great results, if you've taken any of my classes before you've heard me say it before and it won't be the last time either. It's that important!

A frequent issue for under eyes is that there are usually some shadowed areas that are a bit more blue than the skin around it. So to fix this using the Adjustment Brush tool you will want to increase the warmth by increasing the Temp and Tint as well as raising the Exposure a little too. Since we are doing under eyes it's always a nice touch to decrease the clarity a little bit, to soften those fine lines under the eyes. Make sure your painting with a fairly soft Feather and a low Flow so that you can gradually paint the effect in under the eye and not over do it.

Now as you paint the effect over the under eyes you'll notice the skin lightens, gets warmer and a little softer with each brush stroke you make. When you paint the effect on gradually in this way the end result is much more realistic. Well there you have it, another very effective way to clean up under eyes in Lightroom.



Under eye BEFORE

Under eye AFTER

Adjustment Brush Custom Under Eye Settings

Save Current Settings

Alright so we see how well that brush with those settings worked to mitigate some of that under eye. I don't know about you but I could use this brush on a lot of images that I work on day-to-day. I have this rule that if you are going to do something more than five times you should have a brush for it in Lightroom. So lets create a custom brush with these settings and save it for quick access in the future. To save these settings as a brush click the arrows next to the word 'Custom' at the top of the Adjustment Brush panel. This will open a dropdown menu where you can select - Save Current Settings as New Preset... This will bring up the naming dialogue box, here you just type the name of the brush. Let's call this one -

Imaging_UnderEye_Min

We are calling it minimum because we didn't take the sliders very far and we made subtle changes.

New Preset Name

TIP~ Now that you know how to create and save a custom brush, make a few variations of each brush you make. For example make another custom brush for under eyes where the sliders are a little more heavy handed so the effect is stronger when you use the brush. But don't stop there variety so you already have it when you need it!!

Next lets move on to skin softening using the Adjustment Brush tool to localize our adjustments to only the skin. Start by zeroing out your settings by double clicking Effect in the top left again. Okay so now we want to input settings for skin softening. First reduce the Texture and Clarity somewhere in the 20's seems to be a good range for those, don't over-do it and go too soft. Now something that I personally like to do with the same brush that I am reducing the Texture and Clarity I also like to add some sharpening back in. I

do this to keep the pore structure from being smoothed away completely. So I set the Sharpness in the mid 50's range just at the edge of the red in the slider. I also add Noise to the brush because noise can look a lot like skin texture. In order to do that I move the slider to the left to -100 this adds noise in as opposed to removing it if you move the slider in the positive range. This is just one of the reasons that it is vital that you learn more about this tool. It is so versatile and you can do so many different things at the same time to get amazing results much faster and without compromising the texture of the skin and quality of your work.



Cheek BEFORE Skin Softening

Cheek AFTER Skin Softening

Adjustment Brush Custom Skin Settings

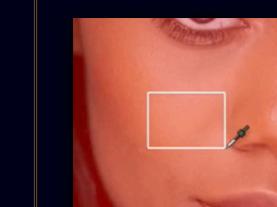


Adjustment Brush Messy Mask

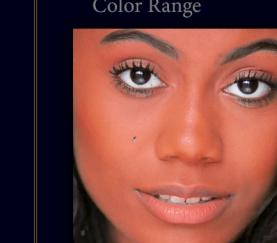
Okay, so here we are going to really get into it, so it used to be that when painting with a skin softening brush over the image in Lightroom you had to be really careful to only paint the effect over the skin. Well things have changed quite a bit, now you can paint this skin softening effect in a fairly messy area where you see skintones. Recently Adobe added a Range Mask option where you can

choose to refine your mask by Color or Luminance, Depth is greyed out so ignore that. So all that means is that if you select Color you can refine the mask by selecting the color where you want the effects to be applied. Likewise if you choose Luminance you can refine the mask by selecting the lightness or darkness values you want to apply the effect. For the example image we are going to choose to refine the mask by Color. Now it's time to select the colors we want to apply this effect to, so you will see an eyedropper tool, use that to draw a small square swatch over an area of the skin to tell Lightroom what colors you want to be included in the mask, and watch as Lightroom does some masking magic!

Range Mask Range Mask - Options Range Mask - Eyedropper



Color Range



Mask On Lips

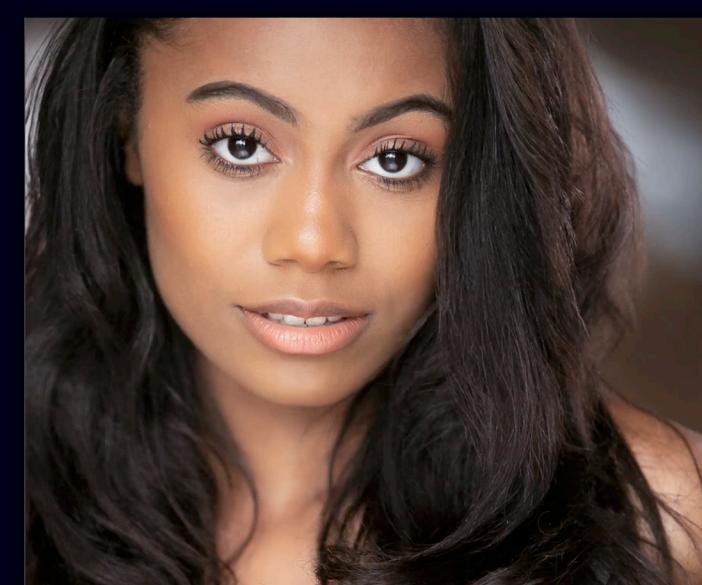
Now as you can see it does a really great job of cleaning up the mask and applying the skin softening to only the skin, it's no longer on the eyes, lashes or hair. The only problem area I see is the lips, so in this case we only have to remove the effect from the lips by holding Option or Alt while painting over the lips. So in less than a minute you can create a fairly accurate mask within Lightroom, and only need to make minor adjustments after refining the mask.



Adjustment Brush Refined Mask



Full Face BEFORE Skin Softening



Full Face AFTER Skin Softening

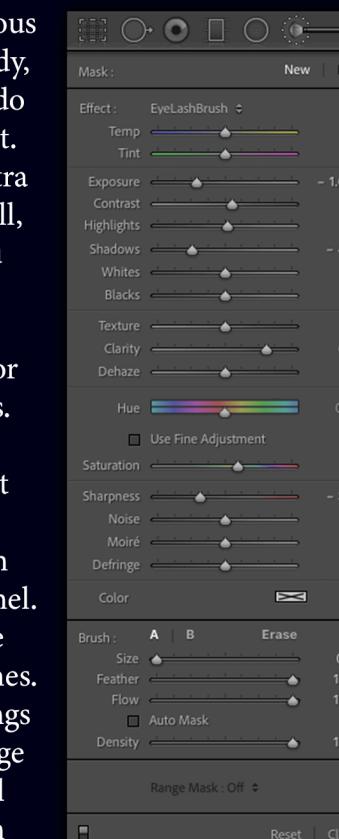
When you look at the messy mask I had made compared with the refined one, it's night and day, and such a time saver. Not only did it create a nearly perfect mask but the effects that were created are nice and realistic, you still have beautiful texture in the skin. When you know how to use these tools they can be so powerful.

The next thing I want you to know is how to add lashes in Lightroom. Yes you read that right we are going to add eye lashes in Lightroom, it sounds absurd but just wait, be prepared to have your mind blown! You won't need to add lashes to every image but it's a great technique to know how to use in Lightroom so you don't have to export to Photoshop if the only thing you need to do is add eye lashes because hey you already know how!

Now this model has gorgeous eyes and great lashes already, so all that we are going to do is just fill them in a little bit. Again my retouching mantra comes into play here as well, ninety percent of what you do in either Photoshop or Lightroom can be done by changing the pixel's color or brightness/darkness values. Lets start once again by zeroing out the Adjustment Brush sliders by double clicking the word Effects in the Adjustments Brush panel. Next you want to input the settings for adding eye lashes. I have found that the settings shown in the example image on the right work very well for adding eye lashes to an image. You can go ahead and save that as a new brush preset so that you can access it easily, and call it EyeLashBrush. There will also be a promotion at the end of this PDF telling where you can access some freebies as well as a discount code. Okay now we are ready to start painting in the eye lashes with a very small brush, I use 0.3 for eye lashes.



Eye BEFORE adding lashes



Adjustment Brush Eye Lash Brush Settings



Overlay of added lashes

Alright now that you can more easily see where the new lashes overlap the old lashes you can begin to adjust the Range slider. Now the Range slider works like this; when you slide the arrow half on the darker (left) side of the slider right it excludes the darker areas in the image from the mask; likewise when you slide the arrow half on the lighter (right) side of the slider left it excludes the lighter areas in the image from the mask. Next we want to adjust the smoothness of the mask until the lashes look the most natural. For this image I had a Range of 51/100 and a Smoothness of 25, and those settings got the results in the example below.



Overlay mask AFTER Luminance Range adjusted

Eye Lashes AFTER Range Mask adjusted

Once you are happy with the lashes you have added you can actually reposition them by clicking and dragging and dropping them. You can also duplicate the lashes by Right clicking, Control clicking, on the activated eye lash pinpoint and selecting Duplicate. With the duplicated lashes active you can move them to fill in the lashes more and make changes to the settings so they aren't quite as dark, or sharp and

Once we have the lashes drawn you may notice some very dark areas that don't look right. This is because the effect is not meant to overlap the eyelashes or those areas become too dark. To fix this issue, with the lashes point selected, you want to use the Range Mask option and this time choose Luminance from the dropdown menu.

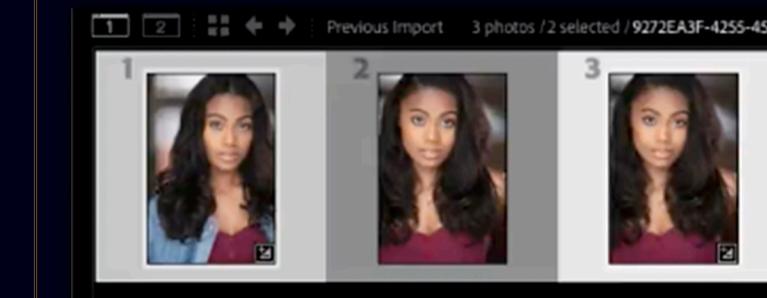
Tip~ When trying to adjust the luminance so that the right areas are included/excluded Press O on your keyboard to see the Overlay of your lashes mask easier.



Range Mask Luminance Range

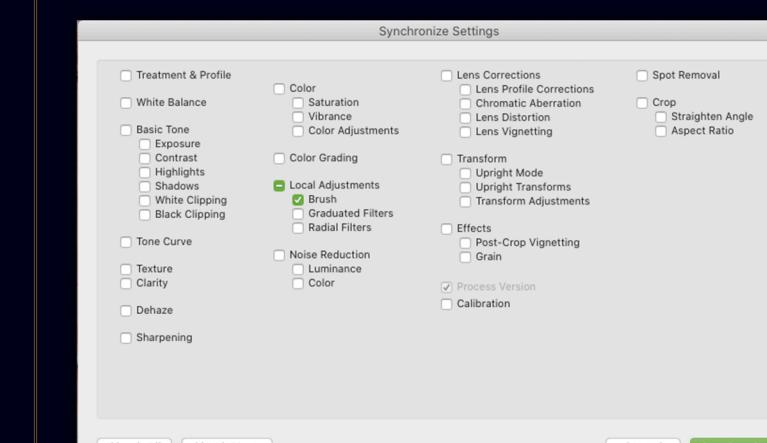
That will make them look more natural and not like you just copied and pasted some lashes in place. So there you have it, you can now add eye lashes without ever having to leave Lightroom. It's crazy, I know but with the right tools, and the right knowledge about those tools, you can really accomplish a lot in Lightroom. Now it is important to note that as of now, you can Duplicate the lashes but you cannot rotate, or flip the duplication, YET! So for now do the lashes for each eye separately on their own pinpoint so that they are individually customizable.

The last thing I want to go over with you is syncing local adjustments across images. For this I have two images of the same model from the same photoshoot that we will be using as examples. First in the filmstrip on the bottom of your Lightroom catalog select the images you would like to sync, and then on the right side at the bottom of the Develop panel, click Sync...



Selected images in Filmstrip

This will bring up a Synchronize Settings dialog box, click Check None and then select Brush and click Synchronize.



Synchronize Settings

What that does is send all of the local adjustments that I made to the other selected image. Now clearly these adjustments weren't made for the new image so we will have to make some changes so that the local adjustments

look natural. So first lets move the skin smoothing local adjustment. The amazing thing about this is since we used Range Mask, those settings are being applied to the new image as well, we only need to line up the mouth of our mask and Lightroom does the rest. Talk about a time saving game changer!! You can do the same with the eye lashes and under eyes, they may not be a perfect match but they will look much better and you can always adjust them. Even if you do have to re-do a couple things, with the new techniques from this lesson it should go much faster!



Skin Smoothing synced location



Skin Smoothing relocated

I really want to drive home the point that as a photographer you need to be able to create great results and in a short amount of time if it's going to be a lucrative profession. So when I am teaching you these amazing tools and techniques and how to use them I am hoping that I am teaching you how to more effectively do your editing. In this lesson we only talked about two tools, but with those two tools we managed to go over two methods of under eye clean up, skin softening, mask refining, how to add eye lashes and how to sync those local adjustments to other images. And those things my friends, have barely even begun to scratch the surface of what you can do with these tools, especially the Adjustment Brush. This is why it is so important to always be learning new skills, new tools, new techniques.

Thanks for sticking with me and I hope you learned something valuable! Until next time!



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