

Removing the Effects of Dust

If your image suffers from dust on a slide or negative that has been scanned or dust that was on the filter covering the sensor on your digital camera there is a solution that is easy to implement. If you have Digital Ice on your scanner you may not have the problem on scanned slides but the technique can be used to remove anything that Digital Ice did not handle. A use of just the Dust and Scratches filter will degrade the sharpness of the image and the Clone tool is harder to use to remove the effects of dust.

The effects of dust generally show up on light monochromatic skies as darker dots so I will describe the solution to that problem. You can however adapt the technique for other problems.

Display the image at 100% magnification by zooming in to the Actual Pixels view.

Now use the Dust and Scratches filter and start by setting both the Radius and Threshold sliders to their minimums. Increase the Radius until the dark spots just disappear. You will have to look at various parts of the image to determine the most obvious and larger dark spots. Then increase the Threshold slider until the dust starts to reappear and back off a little until they just disappear again. Finalize the filter by clicking OK

Create a Snapshot of the filtered image by going to the History Palette using the Create a Snapshot icon at the bottom of the palette.

Assuming you have the Use Nonlinear History option set in the History options select the History State prior to the Dust and Scratches state in the History palette.

Now select the History Brush tool, click in the leftmost box in the new snapshot just created (that will tell PhotoShop to use this snapshot as the source of pixels for the History Brush).

Select a brush size that you want to work with and set the Blending mode of the brush to lighten.

Paint over the dark dust spots.