

## NICHOLE VAN'S URBAN ACTION TUTORIAL

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Congrats on purchasing my Urban Action and Textures set. I'm confident that my actions will deliver the results you're looking for and save you valuable time in the process. I've written this tutorial to get you started on using my urban actions to their fullest potential.

What follows in this tutorial is a step-by-step walk through the urban actions, specifically the texture actions, showing you what occurs at each step. This tutorial assumes that you have

- a basic understanding of how to load and run an action, and
- a general understanding of layers.

If you do not understand these two items, you can find more information here: <http://www.arraich.com/>

**NOTE: Most of my urban actions (with the exception of the cross process actions) are meant to be run on an already edited photo, particularly the texture actions. If you run my urban texture actions on an image straight out of your camera, you will get subpar results. Ideally, you will have run either my color pop or essential BW action on the photo before running one of the urban texture actions. However, you do not need to use my other action sets in order to get good results. You can find many good free basic color and BW actions at: <http://www.atncentral.com/>**

### RUNNING THE ACTIONS

My Urban Action and Texture Set includes 16 actions. For a detailed list of the actions and what they do, please see my Urban Action Information file. All of the actions with the word "texture" in the title will integrate a texture file into your image. This is what gives your photo that wrinkled, distressed look.

The rest of this document will walk you through setting up and running one of the texture actions. The steps are nearly identical for each action. This tutorial walks you through the Tilt-Shift+Color Texture action.

## STEP ONE: BEGINNING THE TEXTURE ACTION

To begin playing one of these texture actions, you need to set up your files correctly.

- Open the photo file you want to apply the action to (See Fig.1, A)
- Open the texture jpeg (included in the large .zip file you downloaded) that you would like to apply to the photo (See Fig. 1, B).
- Begin the action with your photo file showing.
- Choose a texture action to run (See Fig. 1, C). For this example, I'll be running the Fake Tilt Shift+Color Texture Action.
- Press the “play” button on your action palette (See Fig. 1, D).

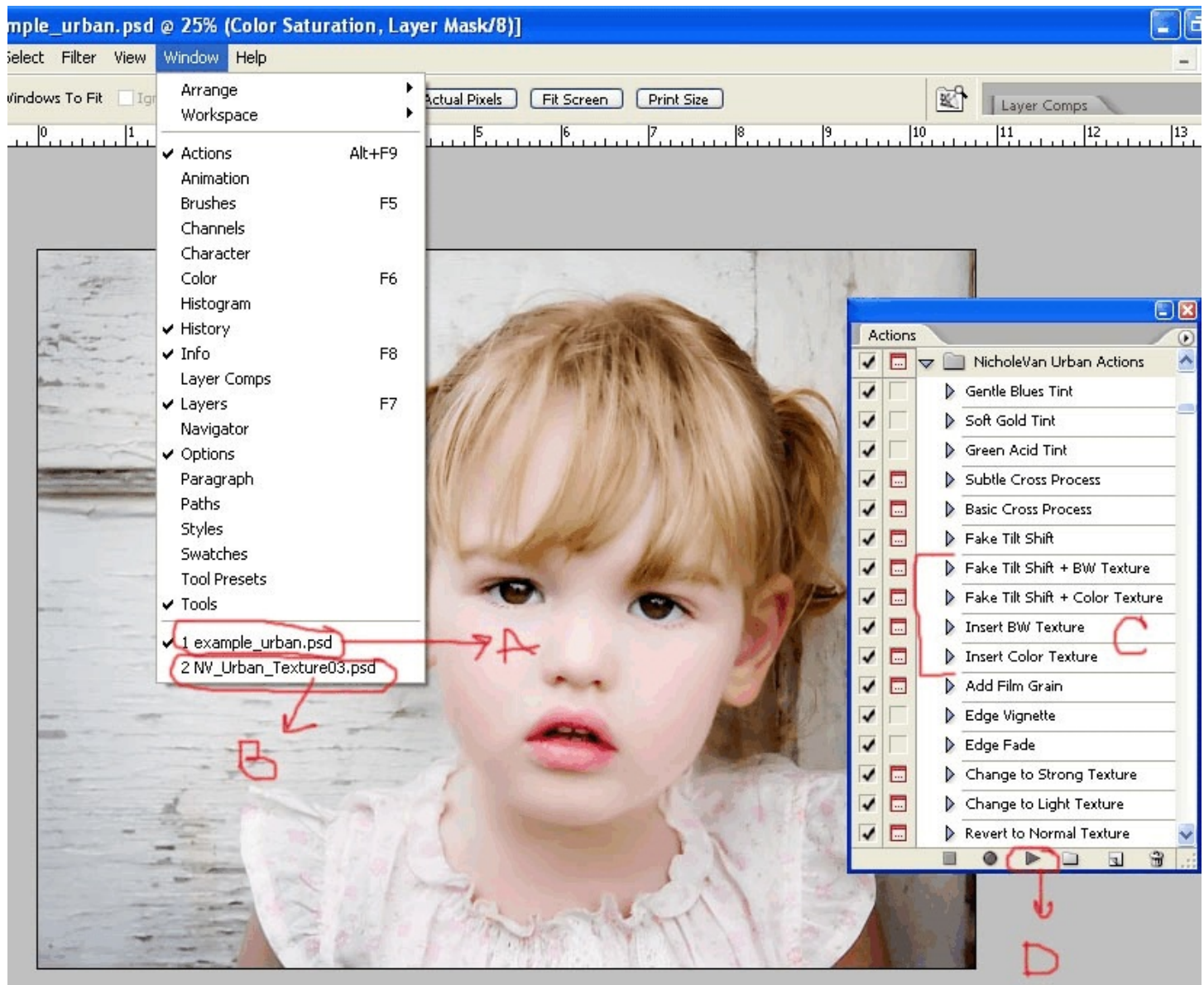


Figure 1: Starting the Urban Texture Actions

## STEP TWO: RECREATING THAT TILT SHIFT LENS LOOK

- After an initial dialogue box, the action stops and asks you to make sure that you have your background layer selected. Then the action will begin to recreate the look of a tilt shift lens. After creating blur (See Fig.2), the action will stop and ask you to paint the parts of the photo that you would like to remain in focus. Right-click on your photo and choose a large, soft brush (See Fig. 2, A), and gently paint over the areas that you want to remain in sharp focus.

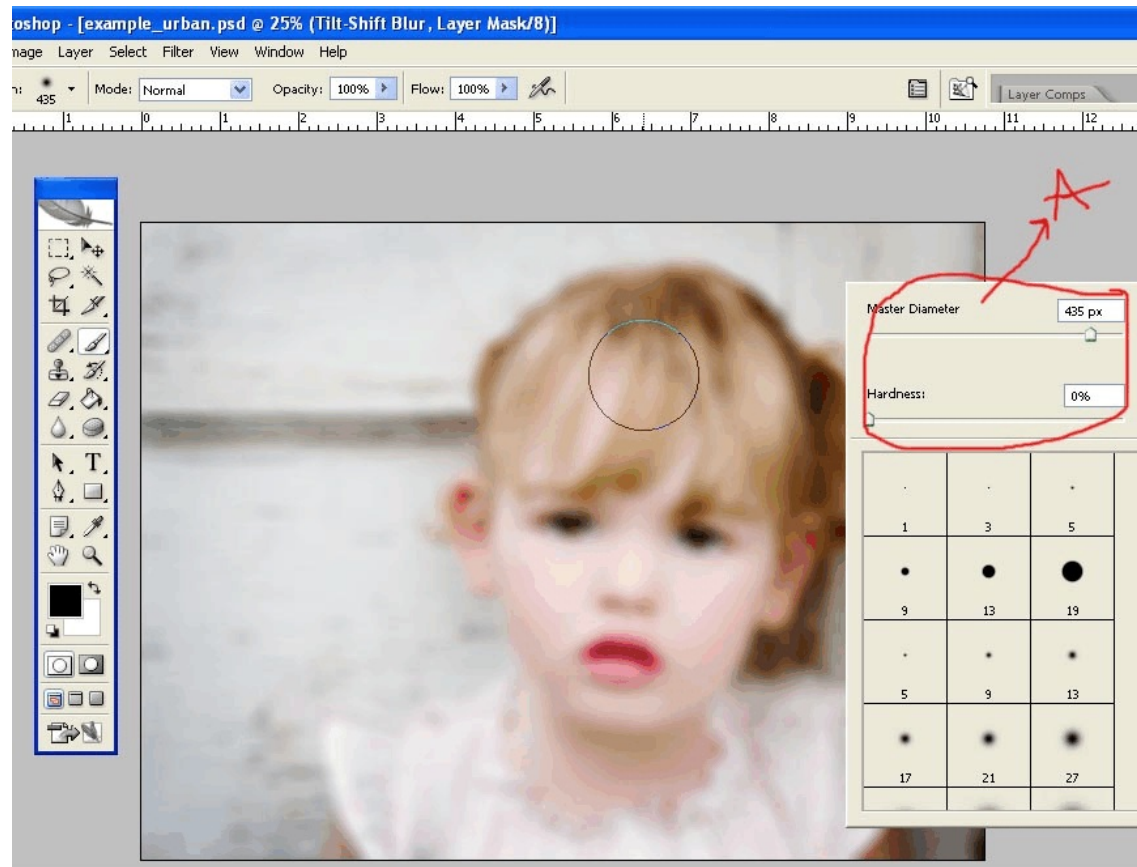


Figure 2: Creating the Tilt Shift Look

- As you paint back areas of your photo, remember that tilt shift lenses create a strip of focus in a photo, running either horizontally, vertically or even diagonally. Try to recreate this look as you paint. (See Fig. 3). In this case, I painted a vertical strip of focus that cuts through the middle of her face.



Figure 3: Painting back the focus.



- After painting the photo initially, press play on your action's palette again, and this time you will be prompted to paint the edges of your focus area at a lower opacity. So with your brush selected, slide the opacity and flow sliders (see Fig. 4, A) and gently blend the edges of your focal area into the rest of the photo (See Fig. 4).
- When you're satisfied with your tilt shift look, press play on your actions palette.

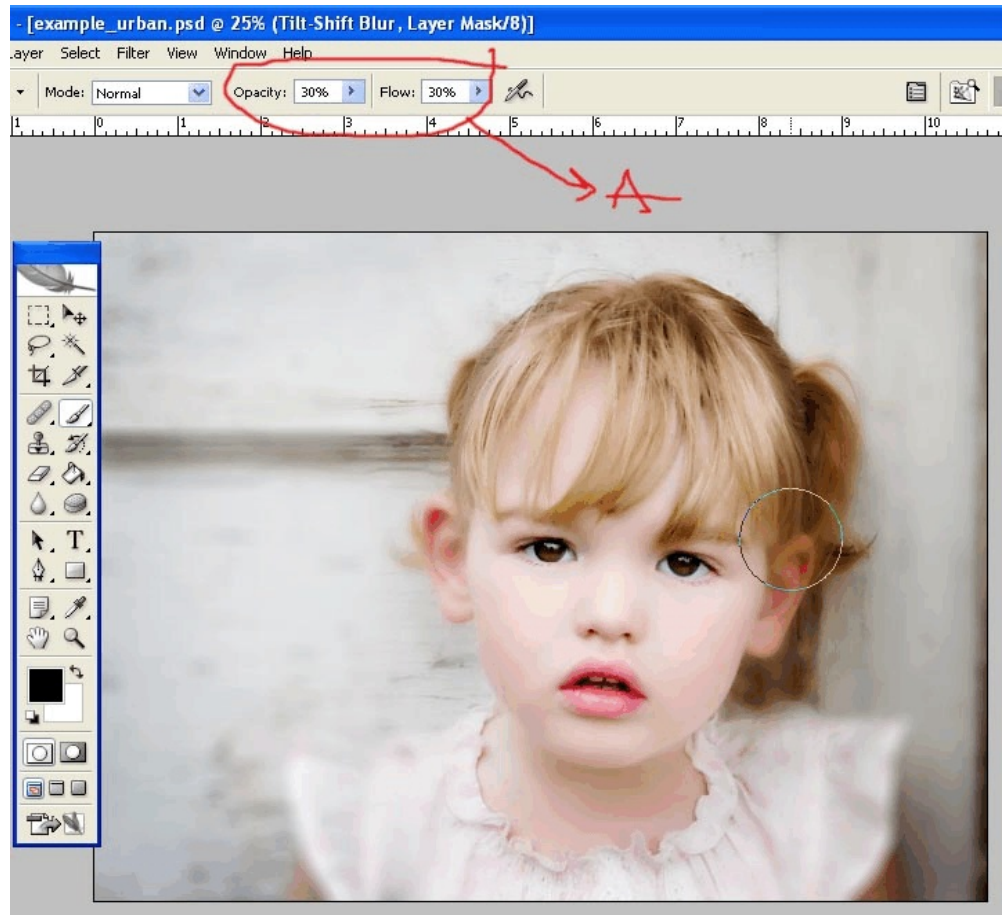


Figure 4: Blending the edges of your focus area

### STEP THREE: BRINGING IN YOUR CHOSEN TEXTURE

- The action will now prompt you to select your chosen color texture file from your Windows menu (See Figure 5A). When done, press play on the action's palette.
- Then the action will then ask you to go back to your photo. (See Figure 5B). When you're back to your original photo, press play again on the actions palette.
- Please note that the action works best if your photo is smaller as shown in Figure 5 and only about 30% the total size of your screen.

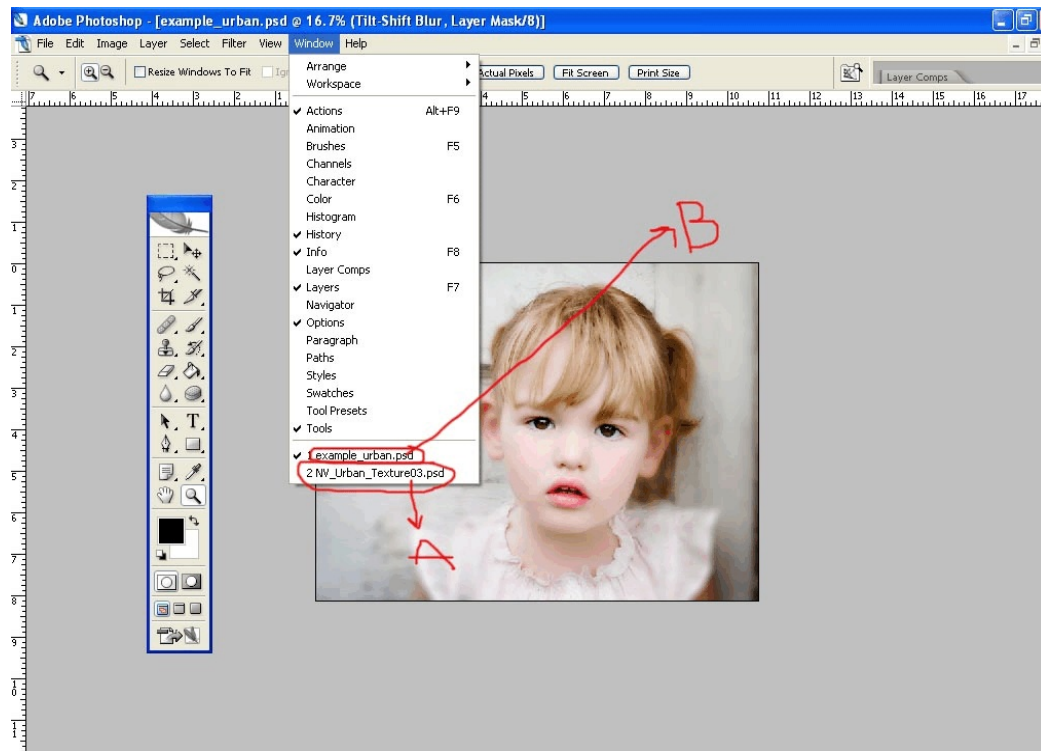


Figure 5: Selecting your Texture File

#### STEP FOUR: ADJUSTING THE SIZE OF THE TEXTURE LAYER

- This step will prompt you to adjust the texture layer that will be added to the photo. You will receive a prompt instructing you to resize and rotate the texture file so that it completely covers your image. Press “continue” on this prompt. Following the instructions from the prompt, use your mouse to drag and rotate the texture image so that it fits your photo (See Figure 6). Your photo should disappear entirely behind the texture. Usually, the texture will be too large and you will have to drag the corners of the texture to make it smaller. When you’re satisfied, press “enter” on your keyboard.

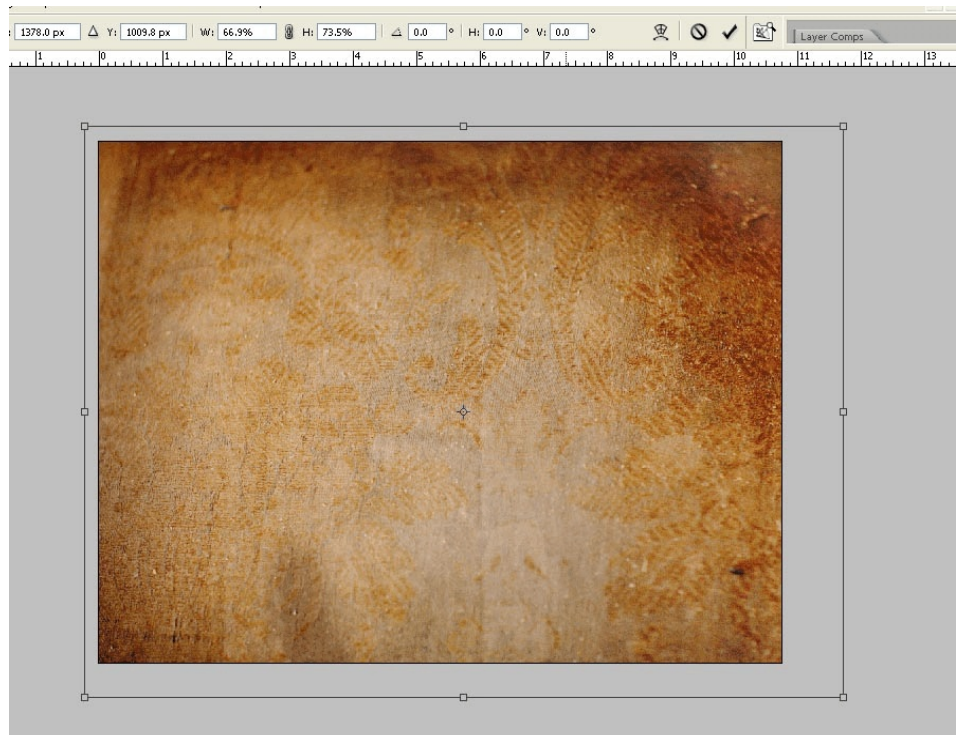


Figure 6: Resizing the Texture File

#### STEP FIVE: ADJUSTING THE COLOR OF THE TEXTURE LAYER

- The action will now prompt you to adjust the color of just the texture layer. At times, the texture color is too strong or too light on your image. Using the hue, saturation and lightness sliders when prompted, slide them to the left and right until you get the desired look to your photo (See Figure 7).
- When you’re done, click “OK”.
- NOTE:** The next step will allow you to adjust brightness and contrast, so don’t worry too much about that with this step.

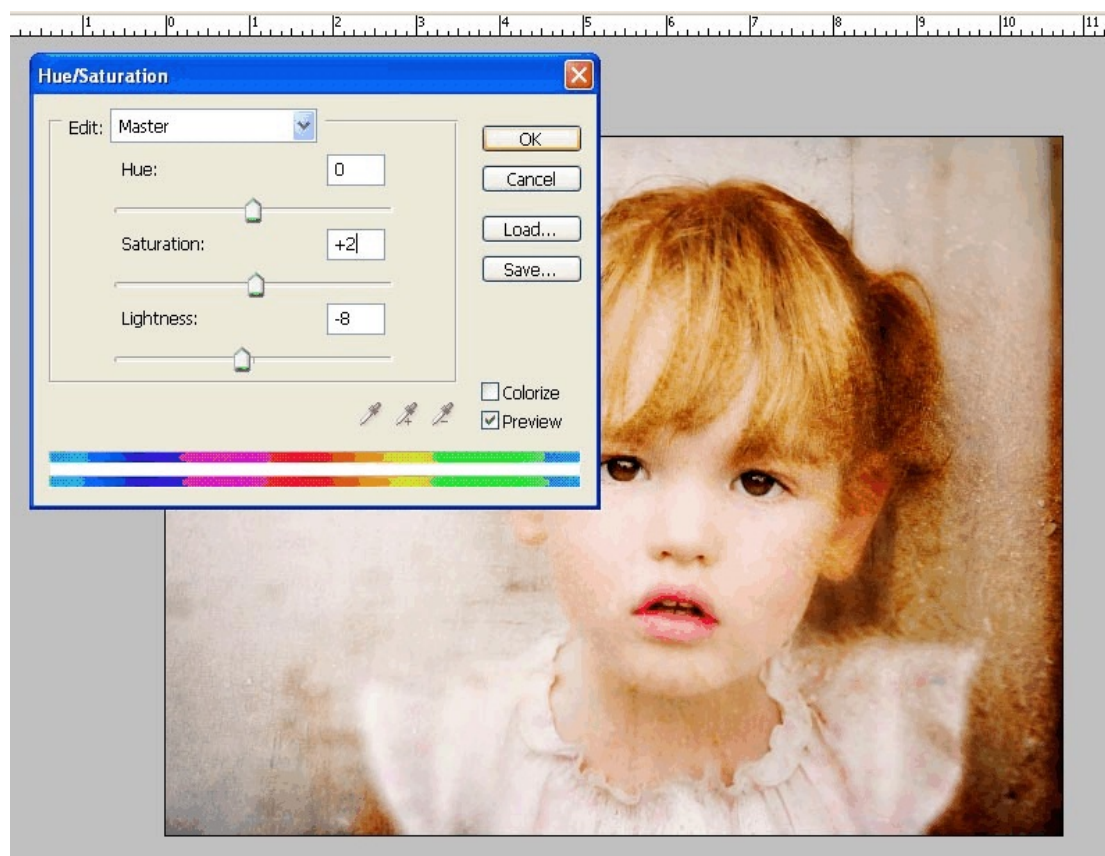


Figure 7: Adjusting the Color of the Texture Layer



## STEP SIX: ADJUSTING THE CONTRAST AND BRIGHTNESS OF THE TEXTURE LAYER

- The action will now prompt you to adjust the contrast and brightness of just the texture layer. At times, the texture itself is too strong or too light on your image. Using the contrast and brightness sliders when prompted, slide them to the left and right to increase the visibility of the texture in your image and/or brighten or darken the texture altogether. As you do this, remember that you will remove most of the texture from your subject, so you're really paying attention to how the texture looks with the background of your photo (See Figure 8).
- When you're done, click "OK".

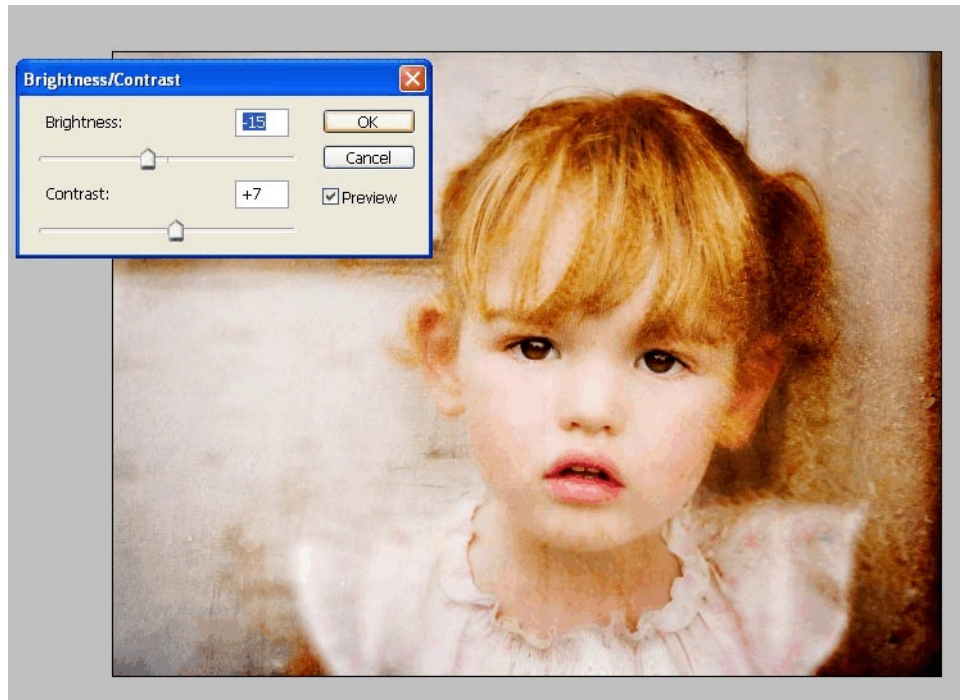


Figure 8: Adjusting the Brightness/Contrast of the Texture

## STEP SIX: REMOVING UNWANTED TEXTURE FROM THE SKIN

- The action will now prompt you to remove any unwanted texture over the face or any other area. Sometimes, the texture layer adds too much distress to the skin and other areas. This step allows you to remove that unwanted distress. The action selects your brush tool. And then you make sure that your opacity and flow are set to about 30% (Just like Figure 4: A). Then gently brush over the areas where you want to remove some of the texture (Figure 6: B). I suggest removing most of the texture from the focus/subject area of your photo. When you are done, press play on the actions palette.



Figure 9: Removing Unwanted Texture

## STEP SEVEN: FINISHING YOUR PHOTO

- The action is now complete. You can now begin to tweak the layer opacity and add other actions to enhance your photo (like soft or strong texture, tints, edge vignette, and edge fade). For a more detailed discussion of the actions, what they do, and how to adjust them, please see my Urban Action Set Information file

A quick look at the before and after:

