



# Power of the Pen

Have some scratched and damaged photos? Fix them using a Wacom Tablet and Photoshop

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## Fixing Old Scratched Photos

Almost everyone has somewhere at home where they've stashed all the old family pictures. They could be hiding in a drawer or a cubboard. Usually, a trip into this drawer or cubboard would bring out a flood gate of memories, or lots of curiosity. Sometimes, even under the best of care, these photos can get scratched. Most people will scan in the image and use the Rubber Stamp Tool in Photoshop to try to clone away and fix the damaged areas.

**T**he problem with that is that it can be a long and tiresome road to clone. Instead of cloning, here is a much faster way to fix those old photos.

**STEP ONE:** Open up a scratched and damaged photo.

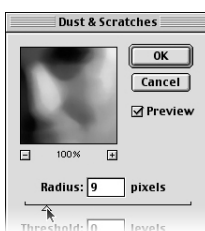


This was originally an 8x10 photo of Stuart Hamblen from the 1940's. Not only does it have scratches, but there is some sort of water cup stain near his left ear and a black, ugly mark on his cheek.

**STEP TWO:** Go to the Filter menu, down to Noise, and over to Dust & Scratches...

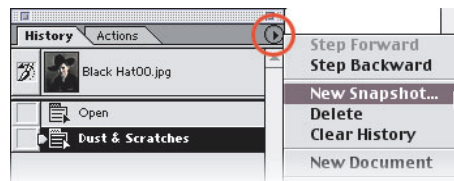
Filter>Noise>Dust & Scratches...

Move the Radius slider up until all the damaged or scratched areas are blurred well enough that the damage is indistinguishable from the background.



In this case, I've chosen a Radius of 9. See how the black mark is no longer visible? We also will not be changing the Threshold for this trick.

**STEP THREE:** Go to your History palette and from the sub-menu choose "New Snapshot..."

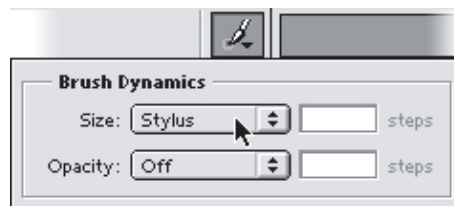


**STEP FOUR:** Click and select the original image layer on the History palette (top layer), but set the source for the History Brush to be the newly created Snapshot 1 (referring to the blurred) layer.



What you are doing is going back to your original image, but you are setting Photoshop to draw from the blurred image.

**STEP FIVE:** Select the History Brush. On Photoshop's Brush Dynamics (Options bar), make sure Size is set to Stylus (refers to the Pen) and Opacity is off.



Since you will be using a pressure sensitive History brush and your Intuos pen, you can vary how much of the image to fix based on how lightly or heavily you draw.

Pressing lightly will produce a small brush for small areas to fix, (like the scratch on the upper left area of the photo, or as this image above shows, on his cheek).



Press a little harder will create a bigger brush and fix the larger problems (like the water stain mark, or the scratched down the right side).



As you can see, this is an easy way to fix scratches and damage to your photos without having to clone. You can even use this technique to soften the background of your photo as well. ■