

Loading and Playing Photoshop Actions

Loading Actions into Photoshop

There are three ways to load the actions into Photoshop.

Method #1

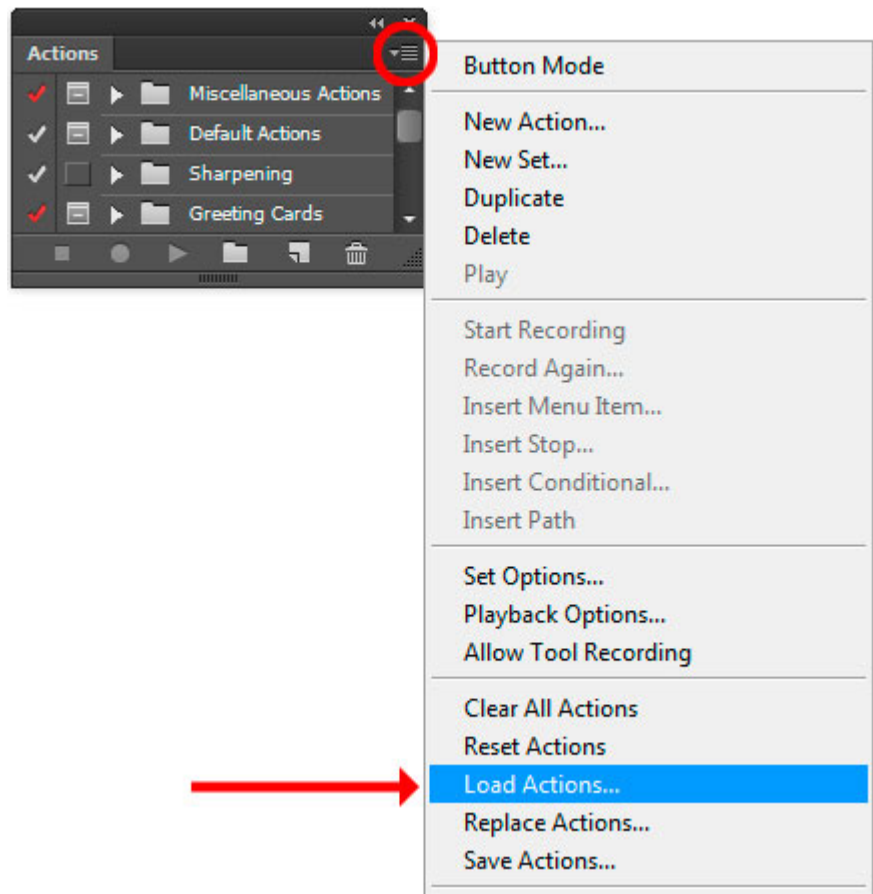
The easiest is to first open Photoshop. Then use the file browser or explore function on your computer to go to the place where you saved the downloaded files. Look for files that have ".atn" as the extension or an "ATN" file type. Double-click these files one at a time. Photoshop maximizes and loads the action set at the bottom of the Actions panel. Do the same for each action set you want to load into Photoshop. Check the Actions panel (Window > Actions to open it) each time after double-clicking an action file to make sure it loaded properly. If this works, you can skip Method #2 and #3 and go to the section called "Playing an Action." (NOTE: This method may fail if the application associated with the .atn file type is set incorrectly on your computer, in which case there will probably be an error message.)

Method #2

Open Photoshop and use the File > Open command. When the file-chooser window appears, navigate to where the .atn files are located and open them. Photoshop will "open" these files by placing them on the Actions panel, which is where they need to be. (NOTE: In order to navigate to the .atn files using the file-chooser window, it may first be necessary to copy the files out of the downloaded ZIP folder to an easy-to-find place, like the desktop.)

Method #3

You can also load the actions "manually" while working in Photoshop. To do this, click the area on the upper right side of the Actions panel to access the fly-out menu (figure at right). From the menu, click "Load actions..." A file-chooser dialog box will appear. Navigate to the actions files in the location where you saved them. Single-click an action file name to highlight it. Then click "Load" in the dialog box to load the action set into Photoshop's Actions panel. (NOTE: In order to navigate to the .atn files using the file-chooser window, it may first be necessary to copy the files out of the downloaded ZIP folder to an easy-to-find place, like the desktop.)



Playing an Action

There are four steps to playing an action (*figure at right*):

1. Open the Actions panel in Photoshop with the menu command Window > Actions.
2. On the Actions panel, open the action set by clicking the arrow to the left of the folder icon so it points down.
3. Click on the name of an action
4. Click the "Play" arrow at the bottom of the Actions panel to run the action.

(NOTE: There must be an open image in Photoshop for the actions to work.)

Once an action runs, it is still up to the user to decide what to do with the results. For example, an action that creates a Levels adjustment layer on the Layers panel would then require a Levels adjustment on the Adjustment panel. A Curves adjustment would be the next step after using an action that creates a Curves adjustment layer. Some actions place masks on the Channels panel, so check the Channels panel to see the results. These are just examples. What you do next will depend on the action that was played.

