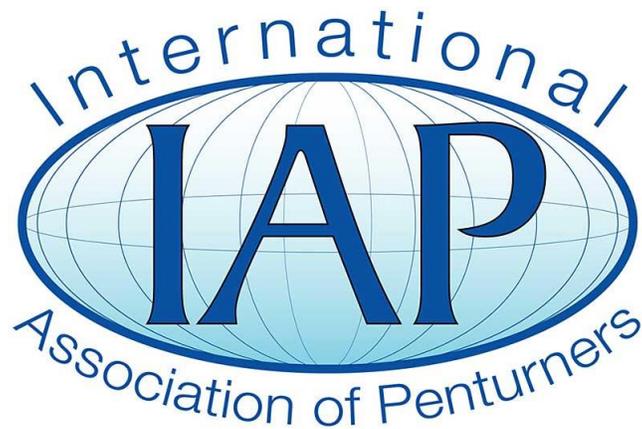


Photoshop Tips

Tip #8: Sharpening

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This tutorial was downloaded from
<http://www.penturners.org>
The International Association of Penturners

Ask a pen turner about sharpening, and you're likely start a discussion about grinders, jigs, honing stones, bevel angles, and burrs. The phrases "scary sharp" and "sharp enough to shave with" will probably come up.

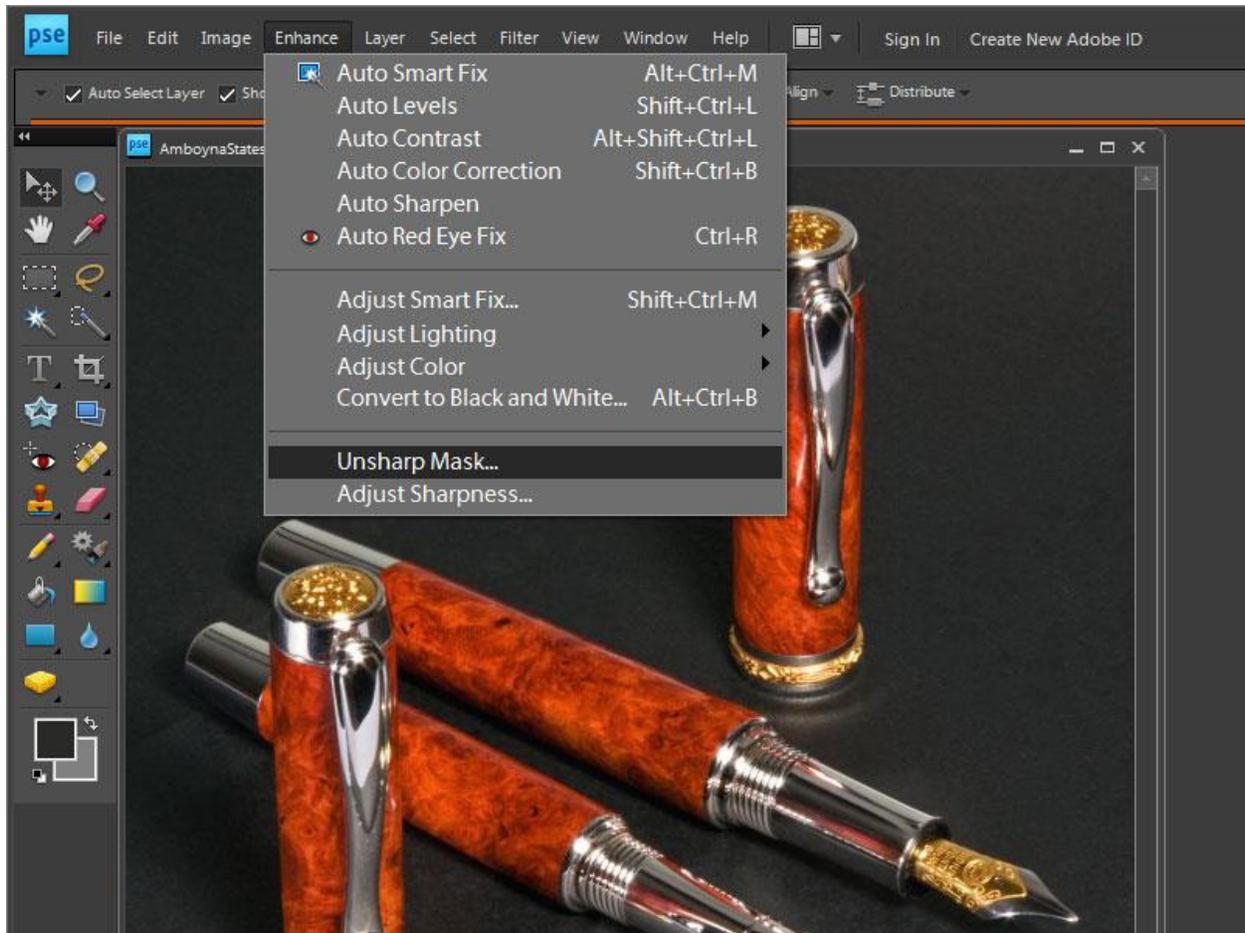
But that's not what I want to talk about. One of the most common problems I see with pen photos posted online is poor sharpness. That is, the details look a little fuzzy. It's not surprising. Most photo processing steps tend to soften the image. The free photo processors are particularly troublesome, especially when resizing photos.

And, just like with turning tools, there are several approaches to sharpening photos. I'm going to describe the method I prefer most of the time. To start off, here is a photo that is a little soft.



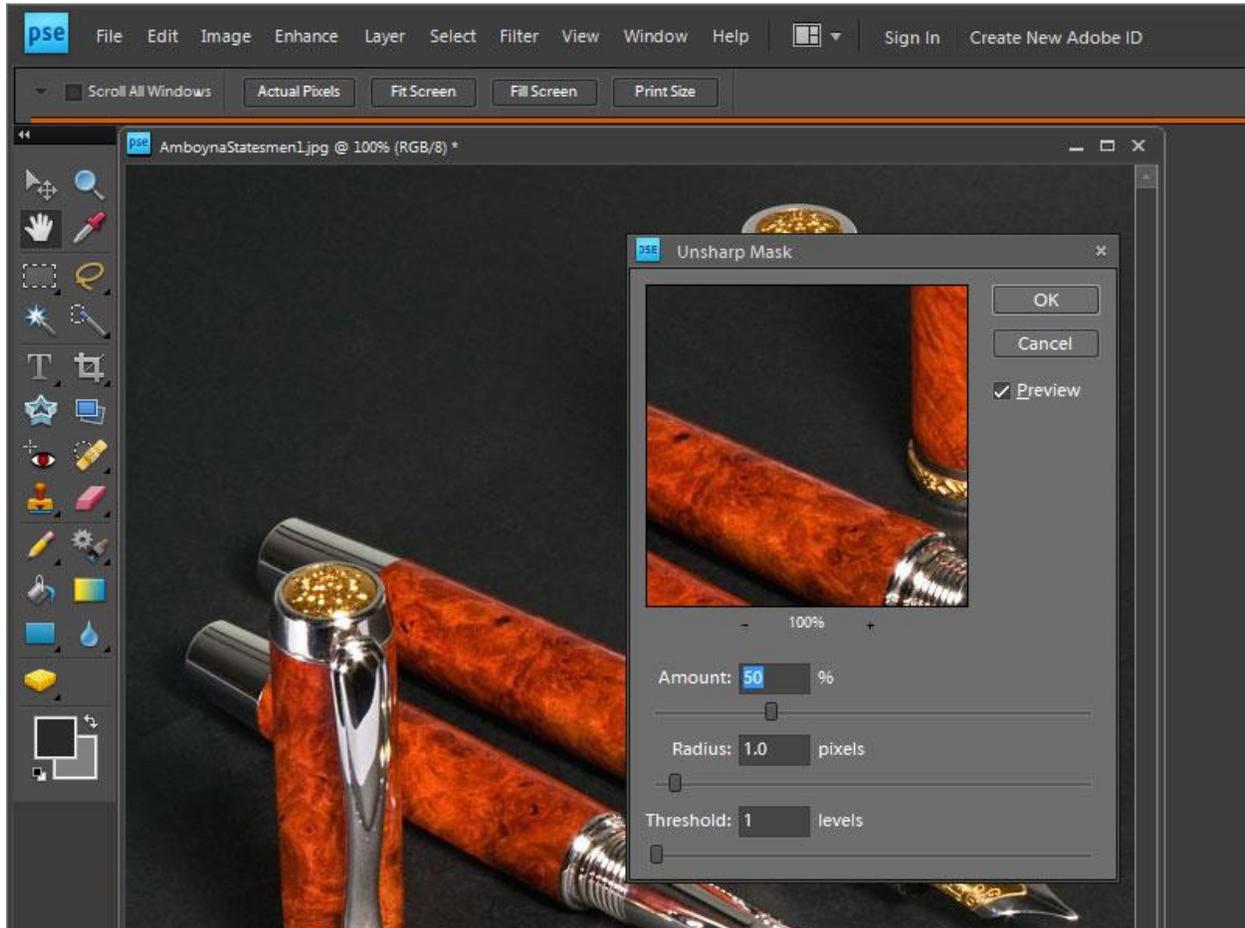
My go-to tool for sharpening photos is called "Unsharp Mask".

Click "Enhance -> Unsharp Mask".



That brings up the dialog box below. Fiddle with the controls to achieve the desired sharpness. Click the "Preview" checkbox as you go to see the result.

The effects vary with the size of the image, so it takes some experimentation. For 800 x 600 pixel pictures, I find the settings pictured generally work pretty well.



Be careful not to over-sharpen. Sharpening introduces noise, making smooth areas look pixelated. It exaggerates edges, and can make pen hardware appear unnatural. Sharpen just enough to bring out the details.

See the result below.

