

PLUG-INS (Add-ons) Tutorial - ACTIONS

By Hummie

INVISIBLE FOLDERS

Before you begin with plug-ins, there is an important step that is vital to installing several of the plug-ins. The folders in which you place your files is protected and, therefore, invisible. Change the folder settings to see the invisible files. Be very careful what you do after changing the settings. The protection is set up for a purpose, especially to guard against deletion of important files.

Windows XP

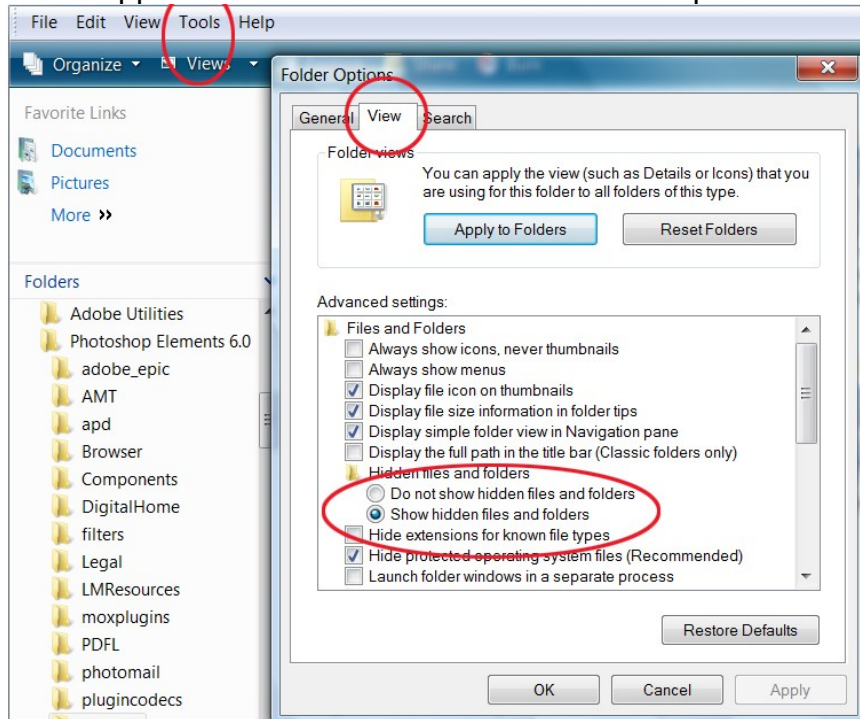
Open a folder, any folder, click on the Tools drop down menu and then choose Folder Options, click on the View tab.

Scroll to find "Hidden Files and Folders" and click on "Show Hidden Files and Folders." Click ok.

In Vista

Open a folder and click on the Tool drop down menu to choose Folder Options (or in the Organize drop down menu choose Folder and Search Options). In the popup box, click the View tab. Scroll to find "hidden Files and Folders" and place a checkmark in the box.

In addition, you can also find the same options by going through the Control Panel/Appearance and Personalization/Folder Option.



BASICS

.atn - Actions

Not all actions work in PSE and, therefore, a test may need to be made.

Actions need to be put in the Adobe folders to work. They will show up in your "Styles and Effects" palette above your "Layers" palette. Please note there is a drop down menu with three choices in the "Styles and Effects" palette: Effects, Filters, Layer Styles. You may need to select Filters from this menu to see the actions and select Layer Styles to see Layer Styles.

Be careful how many you install or PSE will take forever to open.

You will want to keep your original action files in a folder where they are backed up and then install a copy of them.

Here are some commonly used actions for digital scrapbookers.

Atomic Cupcake Actions. <http://www.atomiccupcake.com/>

Grant's Tools. <http://www.cavesoffice.org/~grant/Challenge/Tools/Files.html>

INSTALLATION

XP

PSE3 & PSE4

You should have one .atn file and one .psd file for each action in their own folder. Copy and paste the folder containing the two files to the below folder (with your PSE closed):

C:\Program Files\Adobe\Photoshop Elements 3.0\Previews\Effects

Next, delete six files, the same three in two different folders: "CategoryCache.che", "ListCache.che" and "ThumbNailCache.che"

These files are located in the following two folders:

C:\Program Files\Adobe\Photoshop Elements 3.0\Previews\Cache\Effects Cache
C:\Program Files\Adobe\Photoshop Elements 3.0\Previews\Cache\Filters Cache

Do not be afraid to delete them as they will be recreated when PSE opens.

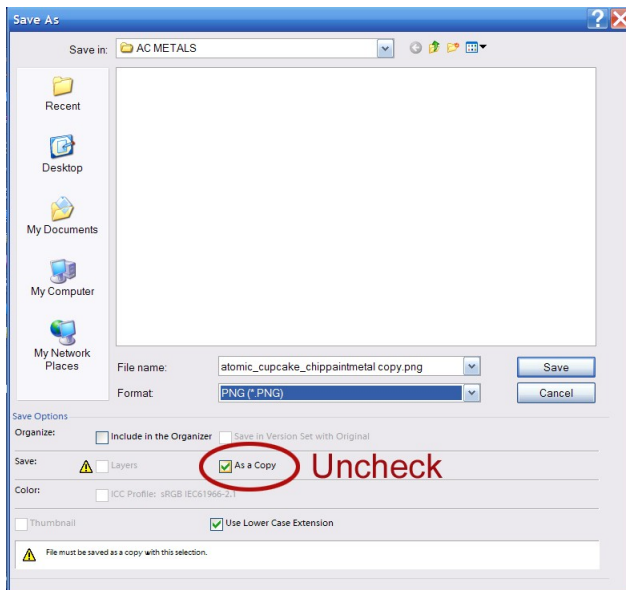
PSE5

You should have one .atn file and one thumbs.psd file for each action in their own folder. Should your download contain a .psd file with the same name as the action, rename the file to thumbs.psd. Copy and paste the folder containing the two files to the below folder (with your PSE closed):

C:\DocumentsandSettings\allusers\applicationdata\adobe\PhotoshopElements\
5.0\PhotoCreations\Special Effects\PhotoEffects\

You will not have to delete the cache files as in the previous versions as the Artwork and Effects Cache is rebuilt every time PSE5 is opened.

PSE6 & PSE7



Actions in PSE6 require an accompanying .png file, rather than a .psd file.

If the action comes in the PSE5 format, open up the .psd file in Elements and choose “save as” to save the file in a .png format. A quick way to keep the file name the same is to uncheck the box for “As a copy.” This will remove the word “copy” that is automatically inserted. I found sometimes this option was not available and I had to manually delete the “copy” portion of the new title.

One .psd file which I had on my hard drive contained several layers of icons in one file. I merely saved each layer as a .png one at a time utilizing the eye to make layers invisible as necessary, being careful to name the icons the same as the .atn files.



Place both the .atn files and the .png files for each action in this folder:

PSE6
 C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Photo Creations\photo effects

PSE7
 C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Photo Creations\photo effects

Do not put the files in subfolders. All .atn files with matching named .png should be in the same root folder.

Restart. The actions may be found under the third icon in the effects palette. The drop down menu must be set to "Show All."

The actions may also be found under the fourth icon with the "fx" on the icon.

If problems occur, try deleting the "MediaDatabase.db3" file.
 C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\x.0\

or the ThumbsDatabase.db3
 C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\x.0\Locale\en_US

VISTA

PSE 5
 Go to the Adobe.com to download and install the "502patcher.exe" patch.

You should have one .atn file and one thumbs.psd file for each action in their own folder. Should your download contain a .psd file with the same name as the action, rename the file to thumbs.psd. Copy and paste the folder containing the two files to the below folder (with your PSE closed):

C:/ProgramData/Adobe/PhotoshopElements/5.0/PhotoCreations/SpecialEffects/
PhotoEffects

You will not have to delete the cache files as in the previous versions as the Artwork and Effects Cache is rebuilt every time PSE5 is opened.

PSE6

Please read XP instructions above with graphics to better understand.

Place both the .atn files and the .png files for each action in this folder:
C:\ProgramData\Adobe\PhotoshopElements\6.0\PhotoCreations\ImageEffects

Do not put the files in subfolders. All .atn files with matching named .png should be in the same root folder.

Restart PSE6. The actions may be found under the third icon in the effects palette. The drop down menu must be set to "Show All."

The actions may also be found under the fourth icon with the "fx" on the icon.

If problems occur, try deleting the "MediaDatabase.db3" file.

XP

C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop
Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US

VISTA

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US

PSE7

Please read XP instructions above with graphics to better understand.

Please both the atn files and the .png files for each action in this folder:
C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Photo Creations\photo effects

Do not put the files in subfolders. All .atn files with matching named .png should be in the same root folder.

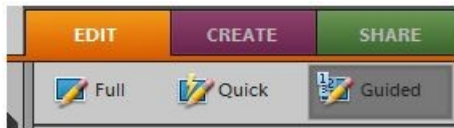
Restart PSE7. The actions may be found under the third icon in the effects palette. The drop down menu must be set to "Show All."

If problems occur, try deleting the "MediaDatabase.db3" file .

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Locale\en_US

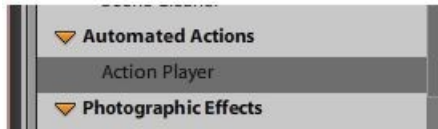
or the ThumbsDatabase.db3
C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0

PSE7 GUIDED ACTION PLAYER



PSE 7 has a new area for installing actions. Click on the Guided tab to find this new area.

Actions in PSE7 may be installed in both the above method and/or the new Guided Action Player



Scroll down and click on the words "Action Player" to open up this new area.



This is what the Action Player area looks like.

It is very simple to install actions here.

Place only the action file in the following folders. No graphics are utilized in this area, so no thumbnail or .png files will be utilized.

XP

C:/Documents & Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\en_US\WorkflowPanels\actions

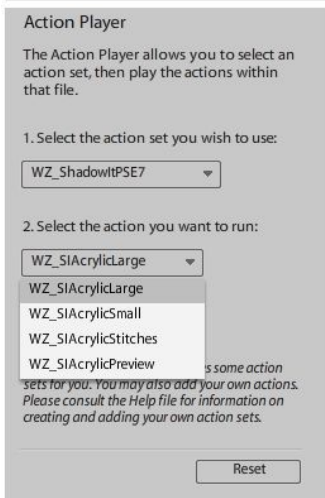
Vista

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Locale\en_US\Workflow Panels\actions

Restart PSE7 and the actions are ready to go!

Please note that actions may be downloaded/purchased with only one action within the .atn or as "sets."

A set of actions will group the actions together as shown here.

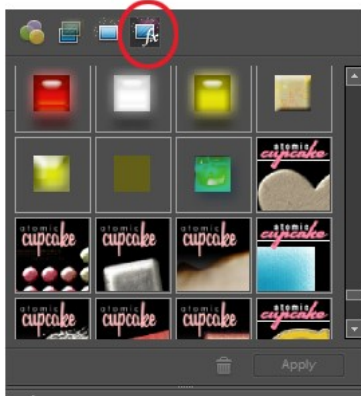


XML FILES CREATE CATEGORIES/GROUPS FOR ACTIONS

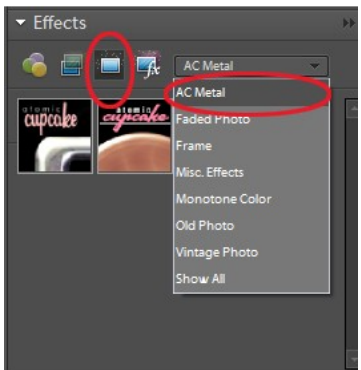
In earlier versions of PSE, categories of styles can be created simply by creating new folders within the main folder where the files are dropped.

In PSE6 and PSE7, to create categories, the .xml file must be created.

XML files can be created for both Layer Styles and Actions in an effort to better organize the palette.



First, note that both Layer Styles and Actions can be found by clicking on the 4th icon in the palette. It does take a while for them to open up. In addition, they are all grouped together alphabetically by name which makes it very difficult to find what you are looking for.



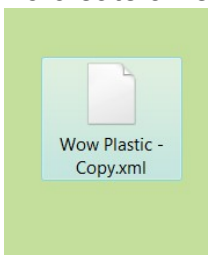
Unlike the xml files for layer styles (see tutorial Part 5) which can sometimes be useful and sometimes not, the xml files to organize actions are very useful.

As can be seen in this preview, once the xml files are created and installed, on the third icon you will see the category. Click on it to reveal all of the actions you have manually chosen to go in the category. It is awesome that you can create whatever categories you want to best fit your needs.

When creating xml files, make sure that the name of the action is identical within the .xml file, as well as that the saved .atn file and the .xml file are identical named also.

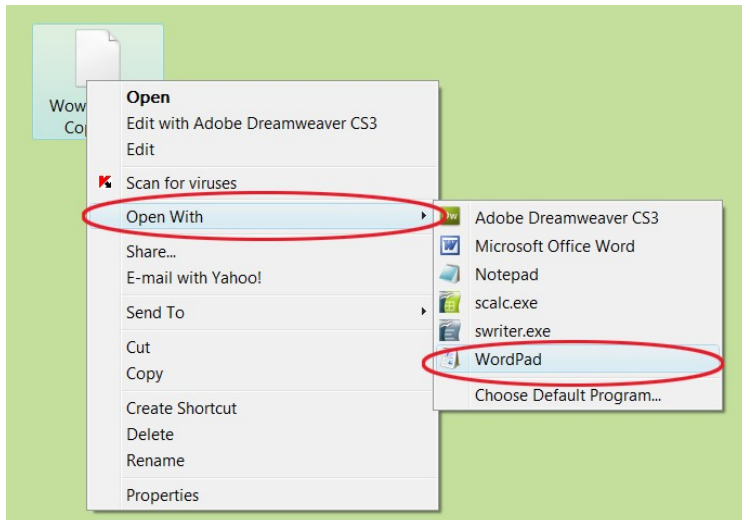
These instructions are only applicable in the area as shown above. These instructions are NOT for the new Guided Action Player in PSE7.

To create a new xml file:



Copy one of the .xml files from the existing folder onto the desktop to use as a form.

Thereafter, open the file with WordPad. (Notepad can be used, but often it puts odd line breaks in code files.) Also, you may also set your Default Program for all .xml files to WordPad so that they will always open in this program by double clicking on the icon.



PSE6

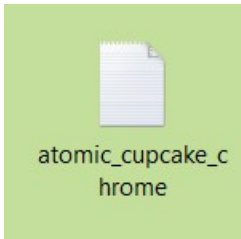
Edit the "name id" value to be the exact same name as the .atn file. Edit the "typecategory id" to be whatever you want the category name to be. This would need to match for each action that you want to be under the same category.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<PSEContent xmlns="http://ns.adobe.com/PSEContent/1.0/">
<global>

  <name id="Name" value="atomic_cupcake_chrome" localize="true"/>

  <type value="effect" />

  <typecategory id="TypeCat" value="AC Metal" localize="true" />
</global>
</PSEContent>
```

Next, rename the file exactly as the name of the .atn file.

Cut and paste this new .xml file back into the appropriate folder.

XP

C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US\Photo Creations Metadata\photo effects

VISTA

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US\Photo Creations Metadata\photo effects

Delete the "MediaDatabase.db3" file in this folder:

XP

C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US

VISTA

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US

Restart PSE6 and the file will regenerate. It will take some time for it to recreate.

If problems occur, you may also try deleting the ThumbsDatabase.db3 file.

XP

C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0\Locale\en_US

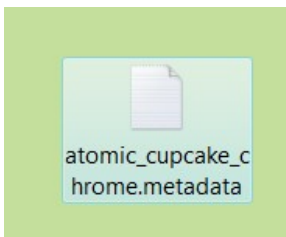
VISTA

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\6.0

PSE7

In PSE7, the .atn files, .png files, and the .xml files are ALL located in the same folder.

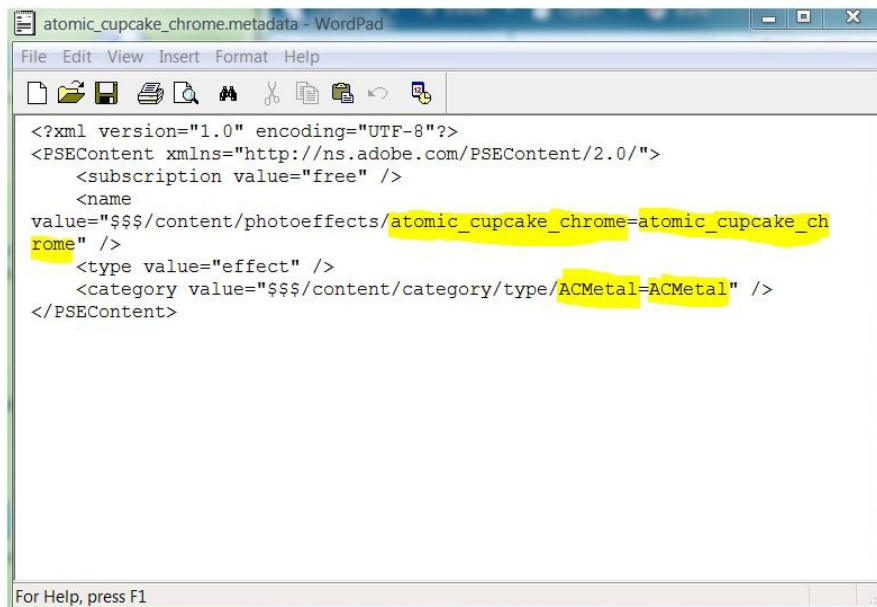
C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Photo Creations\photo effects



You will note that the .xml files are named to include ".metadata." This must remain as part of the file name.

Open the .xml file in Wordpad as shown above.

In the first highlighted area as shown below, replace the text on BOTH sides of the equal symbol with the EXACT name of the action file. In the second highlighted area as shown below, replace the text on BOTH sides of the equal symbol with the name of the category you are assigning to this action.



```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<PSEContent xmlns="http://ns.adobe.com/PSEContent/2.0/">
  <subscription value="free" />
  <name
value="$$$/content/photoeffects/atomic_cupcake_chrome=atomic_cupcake_chrome" />
  <type value="effect" />
  <category value="$$$/content/category/type/ACMetal=ACMetal" />
</PSEContent>
```

Rename the file exactly as the name of the .atn file.

Cut and paste this new .xml file back into the appropriate folder as indicated above.

Delete the "MediaDatabase.db3" file in this folder:

XP

C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\

VISTA

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0

Restart PSE7 and the file will regenerate. It will take some time for it to recreate.

If problems occur, you may also try deleting the ThumbsDatabase.db3 file.

XP

C:\Documents and Settings\All Users\Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Locale\en_US

VISTA

C:\ProgramData\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\7.0\Locale\en_US

PSE FOR MAC

Instructions for Mac users are similar to the above; however, the locations of the folders are slightly different.

I understand that you may replace the C:\Program Files\Adobe from the above links with Macintosh HD/Library/Application Support for each of the versions.

PSE 3 & 4

System\Applications\Photoshop Elements x.0\Previews\Effects

Cache folders

System\Applications\Photoshop Elements x.0\Previews\

PSE 5 & 6

.atn Folder

System/Library/Application Support\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\x.0\Photo Creations\Photo Effects

.xml Folder

System/Library/Application Support\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\x.0\Locale\en-US\Photo Creations Metadata\Photo Effects

MediaDatabase.db3

System/Library/Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\x.0\Locale\en-US

ThumbDatabase.db3

System/Library/Application Data\Adobe\Photoshop Elements\x.0 folder

PSE 7 – Not available for Mac yet