



Topaz Labs, LLC

A Video and Image Enhancement Company

TOPAZ Simplify™ 1.0

User's Guide

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<http://www.topazlabs.com>

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<http://www.topazlabs.com/topazsimplify>

for detailed tutorials, tips, and tricks

Introduction

Topaz Simplify™ is an Adobe Photoshop plug-in that creates painting or drawing type of artistic effects. It uses our newly refined morphological image processing algorithms that remove details in a natural and pleasing way.

Topaz Simplify can:

1. Remove small sized features and produces abstract looking pictures,
2. Exaggerate both features and color,
3. Exact different types of feature edges and lines.

In the following pages are explanations of the different functions and parameters in Topaz Simplify, as well as a few quick tutorials for certain common situations. Please visit the Topaz Simplify website at <http://www.topazlabs.com/topazsimplify> for video tutorials, tips, and tricks! As always, if you have any questions regarding any of our software, feel free to contact us at our support page:

<http://www.topazlabs.com/support>.

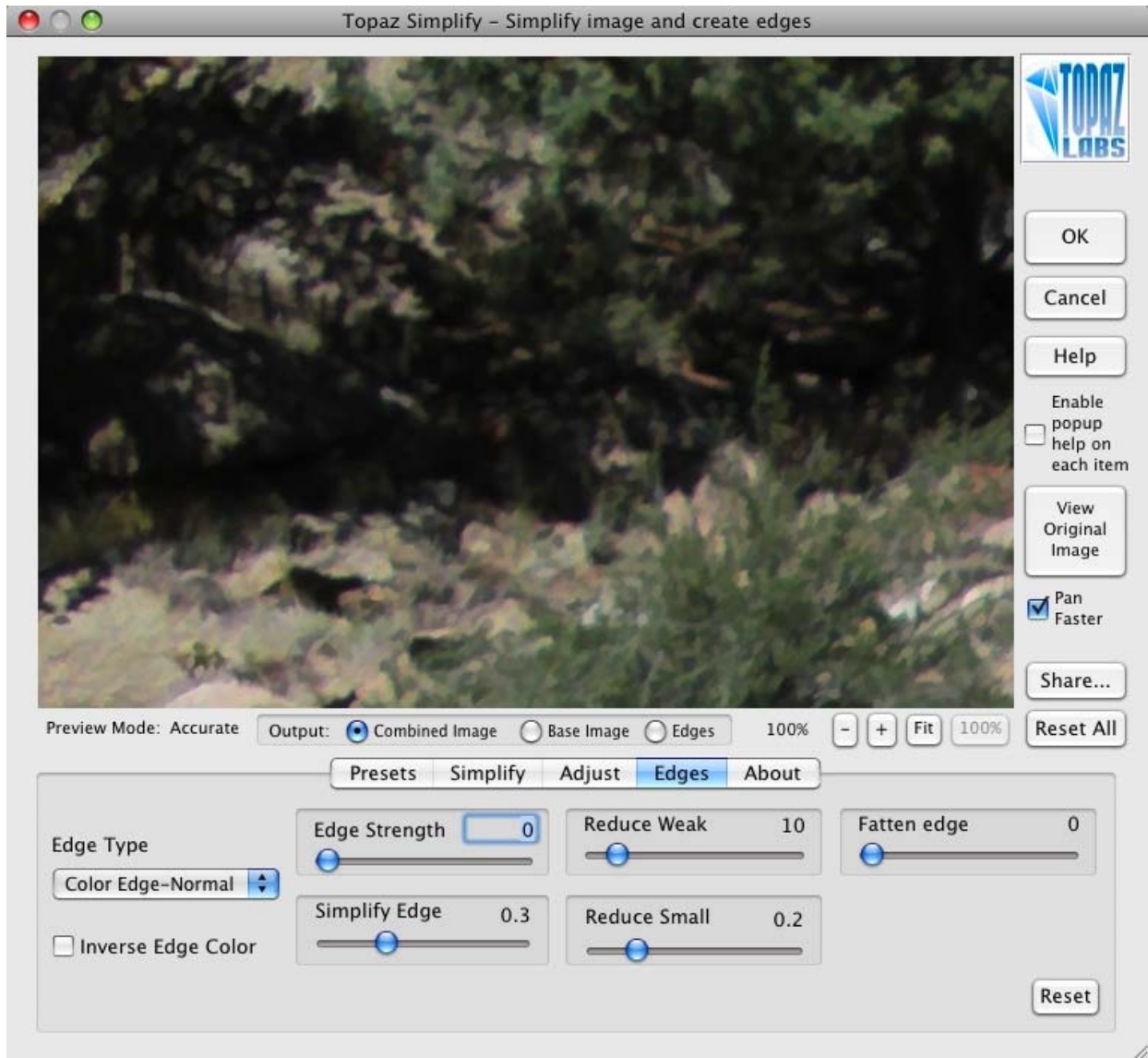
Before You Start

The filter Topaz Simplify consists of three functional aspects. First is the **Simplify** aspect, where image detail is creatively and artistically suppressed to form a base image to work off of. Second is the **Adjust** aspect, where the brightness, contrast, and saturation of the image may be adjusted in different ways. Finally, there's the **Edges** aspect, where the edges of the image are enhanced to add the final touch to the image. These three facets of the Topaz Simplify filter, when used in combination, can create an endless array of effects.

In the pages that follow, we'll first go over the Topaz Simplify user interface. We'll then go over some of the included presets and how to create new ones. Finally, we'll go through how to use each parameter in each tab for best effect and show you where you can get additional resources.

The Simplify User Interface

The Topaz Simplify user interface is shown as follows:



All the GUI items, such as buttons and parameter settings, have **context-sensitive help**, which is disabled by default. This means that if you place a mouse cursor on an item for one second, a help balloon will pop up and display useful information regarding that item. To enable context-sensitive help,

check “**Enable popup help on each item**” box. For a link to online Topaz Simplify resources, click the bigger “**Help**” button.

The **Preview window** always displays a portion of the **filtered image** by default.

To **pan the preview image**, click and hold the left mouse button on the preview image and drag it around. When you let go of the mouse button, the new portion of image will be processed according to the current settings and the result will be displayed. The checkbox “**Pan faster**” controls the speed of the pan action. Check it to pan around a large image.

The **Preview Mode** is automatically set to Accurate when set at 100% zoom or higher, and Approximate when set to anything else. This is because using an image that is not full-size sometimes affects the Topaz Simplify algorithms and makes the preview less accurate. For the most accuracy preview, click the “100%” button to preview the image at its true size.

The **Output** setting determines whether your output will be a combined full image, the base image without any edge settings applied, or an image with *only* the edge settings in the “Edges” tab applied.

To **compare the filtered and un-filtered images**, click and hold the “**View Original Image**” button to switch to the unfiltered image. Letting go of the button will cause it to switch back to the filtered image. You can toggle the filtered and un-filtered image back and forth in order to see the before and after.

You can **zoom in** or **out** of the preview image clicking the “+”, or “-” buttons below the preview image, and you can resize the window as well. The **100%** button will zoom back out to true 100% view.

If you want to share a particular set of settings with others, simply click the **Share** button and Topaz Simplify automatically formats an easy-to-read listing of your currently used parameters. This is useful for sharing settings with friends, or posting settings on forums, usergroups, and emails.

All the **filter’s parameters** are in the tabbed panel under the image preview. The following sections will explain each tab in detail.

The “**About**” tab contains some information about the plug-in. You can also check for plug-in updates here. We appreciate any suggestions or comments and would really love to hear from you, so be sure to get in touch! (Your email address will be kept strictly confidential.) Also make sure to subscribe to

our newsletter on our homepage <http://www.topazlabs.com> to receive new tutorials and free product updates.

Other Host Programs

In Windows, Topaz Simplify is supported by most host applications that support Photoshop plugins. This includes Irfanview and Paint Shop Pro, although other host programs may also support Topaz Simplify.

For both Irfanview and Paint Shop Pro, first download and install Topaz Simplify to the default location.

To install Topaz Simplify in Irfanview, make sure you've downloaded and installed the 8bf plug-in add-on, available on the Irfanview webpage. If so, in Irfanview go to Image -> Effects -> Adobe 8BF filters. In the screen that pops up, select "Add 8BF filters" and navigate to the C:\Program Files\Topaz Labs\Topaz Simplify\Plugins folder and click OK. You'll then see it in the Available/Loadable 8BF Filters section. To use Topaz Simplify in the future, simply go to Image -> Effects > Adobe 8BF filters again and select Topaz Simplify.

To install Topaz Simplify in Paint Shop Pro or PhotoImpact, first launch PaintShop Pro or PhotoImpact. Go to menu File -> Preferences -> File Locations. Select Plug-ins in the File Types list and click Add. Choose C:\Program Files\Topaz Labs\Topaz Simplify\Plug-ins and click OK. The plug-ins will be available to use from Effects -> Plugins.

Image Modes

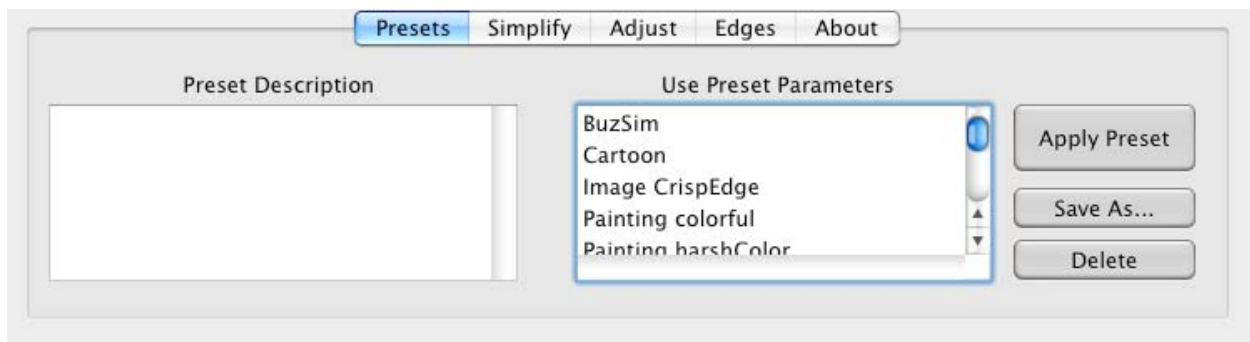
Photoshop and other host software support many image modes such as Grayscale, RGB, LAB, CMYK, etc. Images can also be 8, 16, or 32 bits per channel. **Topaz Simplify** supports both 8 bits per channel and 16 bits per channel.

Topaz Simplify supports RGB mode only. To work on black-and-white images, first convert them to RGB mode.

Using Presets

Presets are a great way to speed up and simplify the whole process of using Topaz Simplify. They function as “snapshots” of your current Topaz Simplify parameter settings that you can recall and reapply at any time in the future. There are quite a few default presets and you may save more, but experiment with the sliders to get best results for each photo.

Please note that not all presets work with all images. In fact, some presets might look stunning with one particular image but uninspiring on another. It's important to use the presets only as a starting point and to use the sliders to fine-tune the look for best effect.



Applying Presets

Applying a previously defined preset is easy and intuitive. Simply click on a preset and the preset description will display on the left. Clicking the “Apply Preset” button on the right will change all the settings in Topaz Simplify to the preset value and you see the result immediately in the preview. You can also double-click on a preset if you prefer. After experimenting a few presets and find one that produce something close to what you like, you can start to go through the tabs and tweak the parameters to fine-tune the result.

Defining Presets

It is convenient to define presets and save your settings for later use. First, adjust the Topaz Simplify parameters until you're satisfied with the result and want to create a snapshot of the settings. Then, click on the *Presets* tab and click the "Save As..." button.

Enter a preset name and optional description and click OK. Please note that if the name you've entered is the same as a preset you've already defined, instead of creating a new preset Topaz Simplify will just override the first one.

Your new preset is automatically saved into the Topaz Simplify presets menu. To apply it later, just select it and click "Apply Preset". You may then go through the sliders and tweak them until you're satisfied with the settings for that particular image. Then, press "OK" on the upper right corner of the filter to apply the Simplify on your image.

The Topaz Simplify presets are located in the following places on your computer:

Windows: *C:\Program Files\Topaz Labs\Topaz Simplify\Presets*

Mac: *[HD]/Library/Application Support/Topaz Labs/Simplify/Presets/*

Each preset is a separate file with the preset name. For example, if you save a preset named "My favorite oilpainting", you will find a file named "My_favorite_oilpainting.tpp". You can email this file to your friends to share your preset, who simply need to copy the file into the preset folder above.

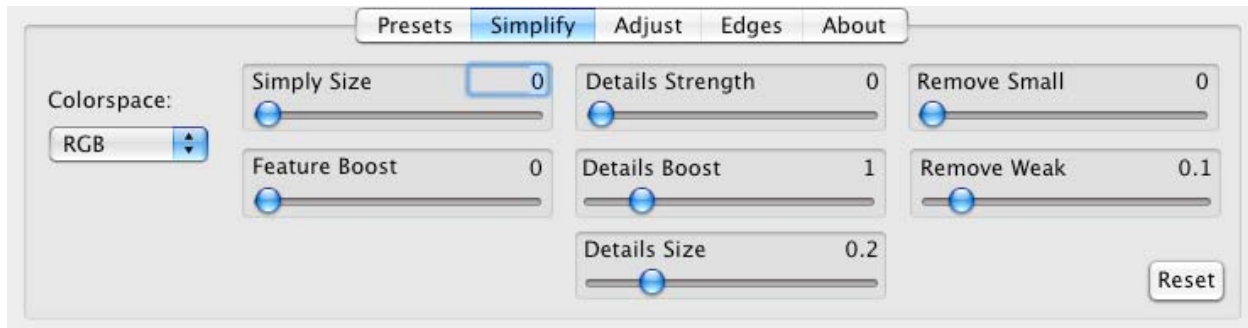
Settings and Parameters

Topaz Simplify has three main parameter sections: **Simplify**, **Adjust**, and **Edges**. The Simplify tab strategically removes detail from an image to give a pleasing artistic effect. The Adjust tab conveniently modifies the brightness, contrast, and saturation of the simplified image for further control on the overall look. The Edges tab creates edges from the photo that can either be used alone or in combination with the simplified image.

It's difficult to describe the visual effect of some of these parameters, but they are very easily seen. If you try them out and experiment for a few minutes from within Topaz Simplify, you'll quickly understand what most of them do.

The following pages will help you understand the purpose of each parameter in Topaz Simplify.

SIMPLIFY



The **Simplify** tab consists of a few different sliders that allow you to creatively add and remove details, one of the main purposes of the plug-in.

Colorspace

Specify the color space in which simplify action takes place. RGB tends to produce more dramatic color effects while YCbCr color space tends to shift color less.

Simplify Size

The Simplify Size parameter defines the size of the details that are eliminated by Topaz Simplify. A smaller parameter means that only the smaller-sized details are removed, where a larger parameter means that both larger and smaller details are removed, leaving behind only features of larger size.

The value of this parameter is relative to the entire image's size.

Feature Boost

The Feature Boost parameter increases main feature detail of the image. If used in the RGB Colorspace it also introduces some unique colorful artifacts throughout the image. To use the more natural image color, switch the Colorspace to YCbCr.

Details Strength

Topaz Simplify has the ability to selectively bring back details from the Simplified image. The Details Strength tab controls the strength of these details. This parameter works with the Details Size slider, which determines the size of image features to consider as "detail".

Details Boost

The Details Boost slider controls the weaker details in the image. A higher setting accentuates weaker details while a setting below 1 weakens minor image details.

Details Size

The Details Size parameter specifies the size of image features that are considered “details”.

Topaz Simplify then brings back these details. Works with the Details Strength parameter, which specifies the strength of detail to be brought back.

The value of this parameter is relative to the full image size.

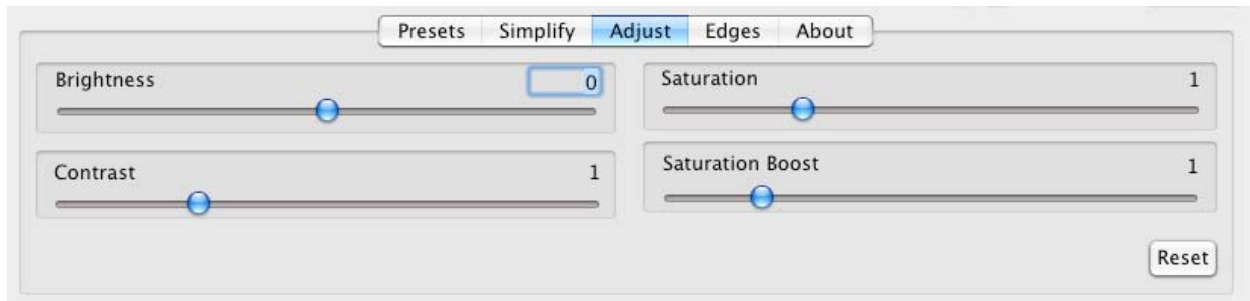
Remove Small

The Remove Small parameter excludes smaller details from being affected by the “Details Strength” parameter. In effect it removes smaller details from the resulting Simplified image.

Remove Weak

The Remove Weak parameter excludes weaker details from being affected by the “Details Strength” parameter. In effect it removes weaker details from the resulting Simplified image.

ADJUST



The **Adjust** tab gives you creative control over the brightness, contrast, and saturation of the Simplified image. Sometimes in the course of simplifying an image some of the color or exposure may be knocked askew, and you can use this tab to fix it. You can also create unique contrast and saturation effects.

Brightness

Increases or decreases the brightness of the image. A value greater than 1 increases the brightness and a value less than 1 decreases the brightness.

Contrast

Increases or decreases the contrast in an image. A value greater than 1 increases contrast while a value less than 1 decreases contrast.

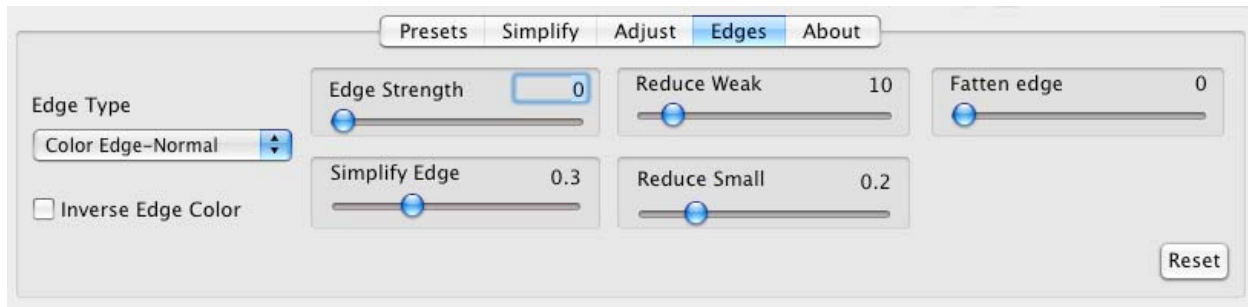
Saturation

Increases or decreases color saturation in an image.

Saturation Boost

Increase or reduce the saturation of weaker color. Setting a value greater than 1.0 will make the weaker color more vibrant without affecting stronger colors. A value of less than 1.0 makes the weaker color even more washed out while strong colors remain intact. You can produce a “selective color” effect this way.

EDGES



The **Edges** tab gives you control over the edge effects in the image. Where the Simplify and Adjust tabs form the “meat” of the image, the Edges tab plays an important role in determining the size, shape, and color of the edges in an image. This can affect the final result in many different ways.

Edge Type

There are 8 different types of color edges you can use to accentuate your image. Choose one of them with this option. These include different combinations of color, size, and style of edge lines.

Inverse Edge Color

By default, the edge is black on white background. Checking this box inverses the edge color to white on black background.

Edge Strength

Increases the strength of the displayed edges. A higher value will strengthen the intensity of the detected edges. This only detects edges that have not been excluded by the Simplify Edge parameter.

Simplify Edge

This parameter is analogous to the “Simplify Size” parameter in the Simplify tab. It excludes image features of a certain size by being processed as an edge. The higher this setting is, the less number of edges will result.

Reduce Weak

This parameter reduces edges that are faintly shown or “weak” in intensity. This is useful to use if there are stray weak lines around the edges that you would like removed.

Reduce Small

This parameter reduces edges that are small in size. This is useful to use if there are small stray lines around the important edges that you’d like removed.

Fatten Edge

Fatten Edge will make edges thicker. This parameter is useful if the edges in the image are too thin or small.

Using Topaz Simplify

For a great hands-on video tutorial on using Topaz Simplify with a couple of examples, please visit the Topaz Simplify page here and look near the right sidebar:

<http://www.topazlabs.com/topazsimplify>

Check there periodically for new Topaz Simplify information, or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/topazlabs> for instant updates and new tutorials. If you ever have any questions, suggestions, or comments, feel free to contact us at <http://www.topazlabs.com/support/>.

Troubleshooting

“I need a Topaz Simplify trial key.”

If you're using Mac, please visit <http://www.topazlabs.com/evalkey> for a trial key.

If you're using Windows, you automatically have 30-day free trial period. If you need more time to evaluate, please email us at support@topazlabs.com if you want a trial key.

“I can't find Topaz Simplify in the Photoshop Filters menu.”

If you're using Windows:

1. Go to C:\Program Files\Topaz Labs\Topaz Simplify\Plugins. Right click the file “tlsimplify.8bf” and click “Copy”.
2. Go to your Photoshop Plug-Ins folder usually located at C:\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe Photoshop CSx\Plug-Ins. First, delete anything that is currently there that has to do with Topaz Simplify. This includes any folder that might be labeled “TopazSimplify” or any tlsimplify.8bf file. Right click on any empty space and click “Paste”.
3. Quit and restart Photoshop and Topaz Simplify will appear in your Filters menu. You will have to open up an image to be able to use Topaz Simplify.

If you're using Mac:

1. Go to /Library/Application Support/Topaz Labs/Simplify/Plugins and right click Topaz_simplify.plugin. Click “Copy”.
2. Go to Applications/Adobe Photoshop CSx/Plug-Ins (or wherever your Photoshop Plug-Ins folder is located). Delete any current reference to Topaz Simplify. Afterwards, right click any empty spot and Paste the Topaz_simplify.plugin file into the Photoshop Plug-Ins folder.
3. Quit and restart Photoshop and Topaz Simplify will appear in your Filters menu. You will have to open up an image to be able to use Topaz Simplify.

“Topaz Simplify gives me a ‘not enough memory’ error.”

The rule of thumb is, if you have 2 GB RAM, you'll probably be able to process a 70 MB 8-bit RGB image or a 120 MB 16-bit RGB image. Large images may cause the “not enough memory” error and you need to add more RAM to your computer.

However, if you get this error with smaller image, you can try to allocate more memory for Photoshop. Go to Edit->Preferences in Windows or Photoshop->Preferences in Mac and click Performance. Try bumping up the amount of RAM that Photoshop is allowed to use to about 90%, but not higher. Quit and restart Photoshop and see if it helps. You may even experiment other values.

If you need to process very large image, you can use 64-bit Adobe Photoshop CS4.

“I can't see the Topaz presets!”

This is probably because your presets file is not readable. To check on Mac, go to “*Library/Application Support/Topaz Labs/Simplify*” and right click the folder *Presets*. Make sure everyone has at least Read access to the folder. You'll also need Write access if you want to save presets.

If you have any more issues with the software, visit <http://www.topazlabs.com/support> and tell us!