

## HOW TO FIX A VIGNETTE

### Introduction

A vignette is a common problem when shooting with wide angle lenses whilst using filters. Frequently the edge of the filter holder intrudes into the corner of the image or there is sufficient fall off of light around the edge of the lens to make the corners appear dark. This is most frequently seen with clear skies as in figure 1 below.

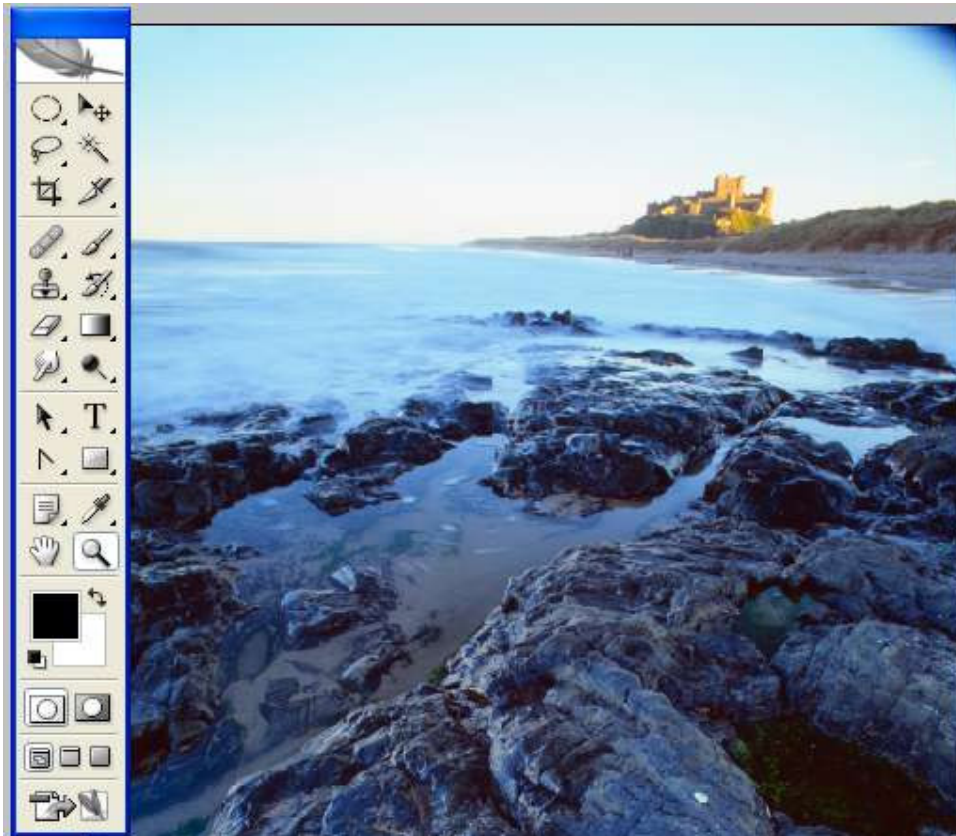


Figure 1 – the starting point

Where the problem is experienced with a clear sky it is easily corrected using the “Clone” and “Healing Brush Tools” in Photoshop. It is also possible to correct areas with detail but this is a little more complex and beyond this tutorial.

### An Easy Fix

Before I describe the fix, take a moment to ensure you know which tool is which in your Photoshop tools palette. An example of the two tools is shown below in figure 2 below, with the lower tool being the Clone brush and the upper tool being the Healing brush. Be sure not to confuse the Healing brush shown here with the Spot Healing brush.

The spot healing brush appear in the same location on the tools pallet, with a slightly different icon and when used does not require you to set a source point from which to sample the repair. The results with the spot healing brush for the repair you are about to perform are poor. If you are unsure which brush is selected you can cycle through

the tools by holding down the “Alt” key (apologies to the Mac users I only know this key for the PC) and then clicking on the tool in question; you might be surprised at what you find.



Figure 2 – The Clone tool and Healing brush

The steps to make the basic correction are as follows:

1. Zoom in to the affected corner at 100% so that you can see what you are doing
2. Select the Clone tool and set the brush size (appears in the tool bar) to a suitable size. If I have a lot of area to correct I might choose a size of 30 pixels or more. The other setting I change is the “Hardness” which is also found in the brush size toolbar. I tend to set the hardness to around 80% when working with the clone tool as this makes the edges of the brush slightly soft to give a more natural appearance. Configuring these settings in the toolbar can be seen here in figure 3.

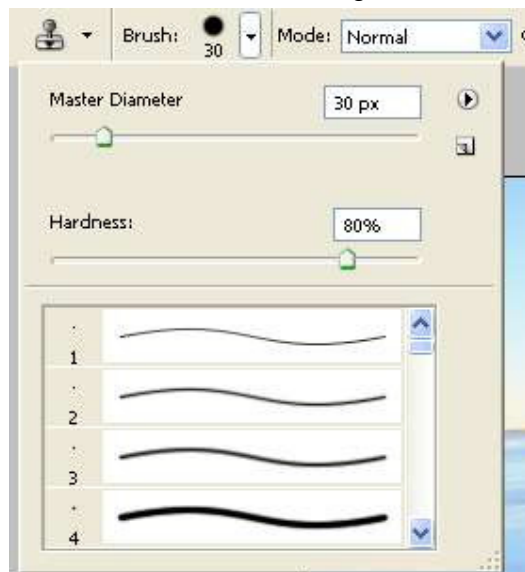


Figure 3 – Brush options with the Clone and Healing Brush

3. Hold down the Alt key and take a source location to sample the repair from the top edge of the sky where the Vignette starts. This can be seen in figure 4 below.

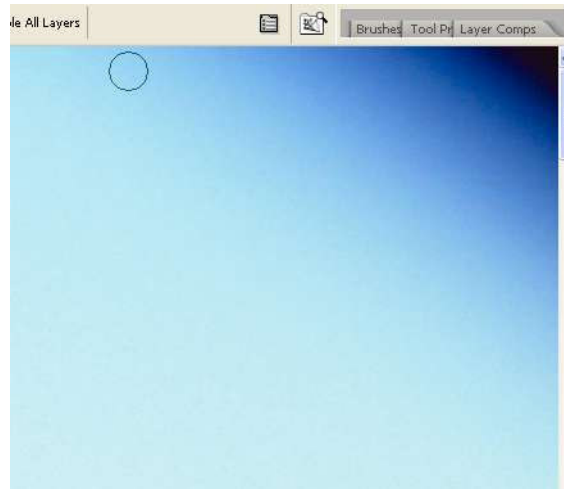


Figure 4 – Where to sample the repair from

4. Having taken your sample point move the brush to the top corner of the affected area and paint in the new cloned sky. Taking the sample in this way and then painting towards the sample point makes the correction easier to perform.
5. Once you have done you will have a fix something like the one shown in figure 5 below.



Figure 5 – First stage of the repair having used the Clone tool

6. I am sure you will agree that the fix isn't yet convincing but the next step will change all that. Select the Healing brush and set the brush to a suitable size. With the healing brush there is no need to soften the edges of the brush because this is done automatically for you by Photoshop. I therefore tend to use a hardness setting of 100%.
7. Take a sample point for the Healing brush by holding down the Alt key and clicking on the area to sample from. Again this should be just to the top left of the affected area. Now paint over the entire area that you cloned in the earlier step, overlapping the edges of this slightly. When you release the mouse button you will find the fixed area is seamlessly blended with the surrounding sky as shown in figure 6 below.

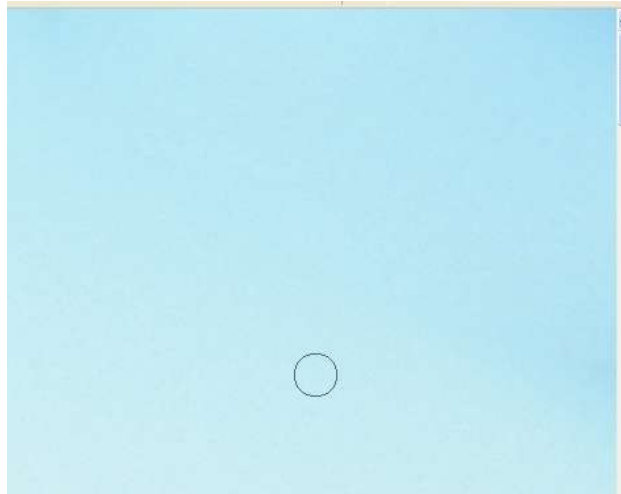


Figure 6 – Finished repair

A quick simple fix to what can often seem like a serious problem.