



**Topaz Labs, LLC**

*A Video and Image Enhancement Company*

**TOPAZ SIMPLIFY™ 2.0**

## **User's Guide**

**April 2009**

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<http://www.topazlabs.com>

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

for detailed tutorials, tips, and tricks

# Introduction

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**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>.

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# Before You Start

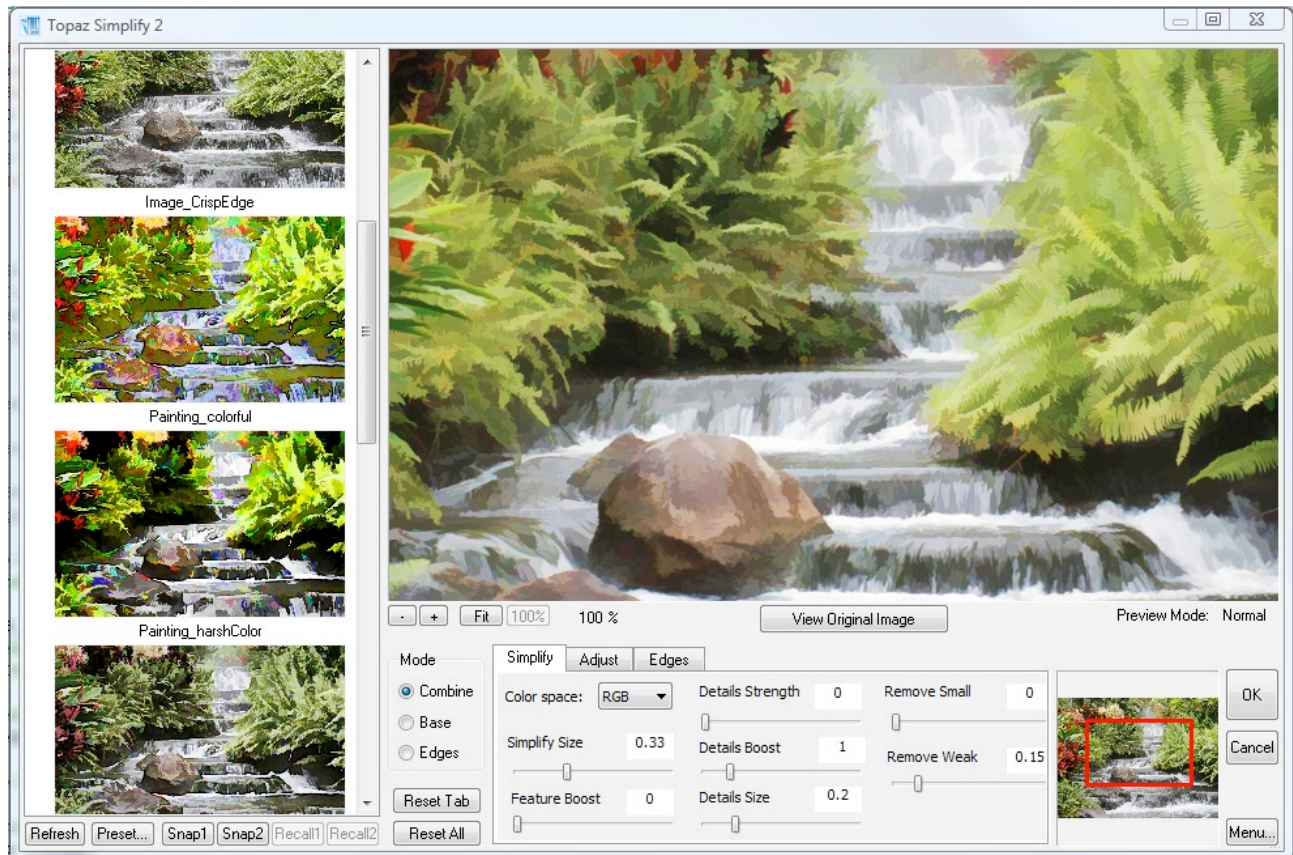
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The filter Topaz Simplify consists of three functional aspects. First is the **Simplify** aspect, where image detail is creatively and artistically suppressed to form a base image to work off of. Second is the **Adjust** aspect, where the brightness, 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. When enabled, 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.

The left side of the window contains the **Presets panel**, where you can preview, apply, and manipulate different presets.

The big image on the top-right is the Preview section that shows you the processed preview of the image. 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”** in Menu...>Preferences controls the speed of the pan action. Check it to pan around a large image.

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 original image back and forth in order to see the before and after. You can also use the SPACE key for the same purpose.

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 **Fit** button will attempt to fit the entire image into the window. The **100%** button will zoom to 100% view. If zoomed below 100% the preview image will internally be resized in order to speed up preview updating.

You may find some of the shortcuts handy as well. Pressing and holding the **SPACE** bar shows the original image, and releasing it shows the processed image. **“Ctrl +”** and **“Ctrl -”** keys zoom in and out of the image, just like in Photoshop. You can use the **arrow keys** to adjust the value of slider that is currently selected. A complete list of the short-cut keys can be found later in this manual.

All the **filter’s parameters** are in the tabbed panel under the image preview. The following sections will give a quick overview of the **Preset**s section, and the section after that will explain the **Simplify**, **Adjust**, and **Edges** tabs.

## Host Programs

In Windows, Topaz Simplify is supported by most host applications that support Photoshop plug-ins. This includes Irfanview and Paint Shop Pro, Painter, 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 2\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 2\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.

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# Using Presets

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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. We’ve included some presets for you and, although they won’t work for

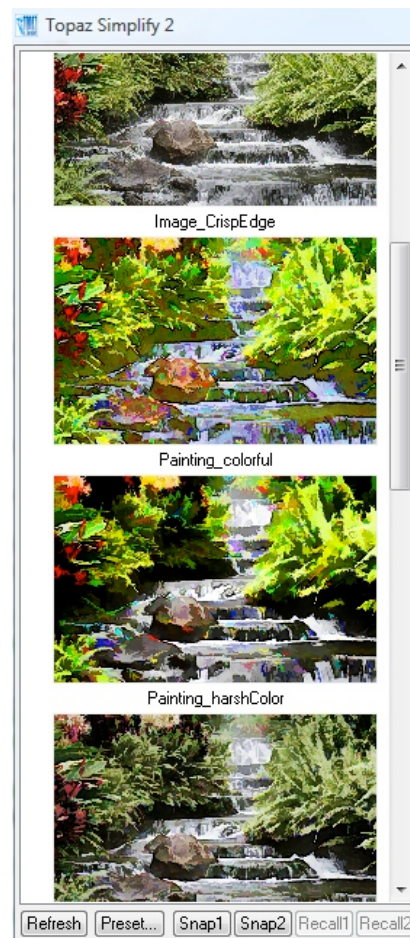
every single photograph, they serve as excellent starting points for customized tweaking.

Please note that presets are only meant to be a starting point and different images may not work with certain presets. Each photograph is unique and presets may not bring out the best in certain image. The best way to get great-looking images is to experiment with the filter until you’re satisfied. Despite the number of sliders and settings, getting a great result is easier than you might think!

## Applying Presets

Applying a previously defined preset is easy and intuitive. Simply clicking on a preset will change all the settings in Topaz Simplify to match the selected preset. At this point you may still want to go through the tabs and tweak the parameters.

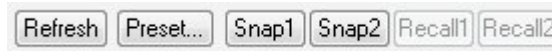
If you’d prefer to see the presets in List mode instead of having a preview for every single one, click the **Preset...** menu and hit “**Toggle list/Thumbnail**”. The plug-in will load a lot faster since no thumbnail pictures need to be updated.



## Snapshots

New in Topaz Simplify v2 is the **Snapshots** feature:

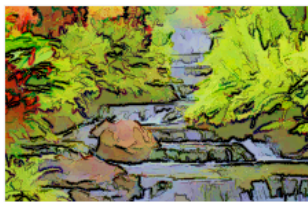




The Snapshots feature gives you a quick way to create up to two snapshots of your settings to compare without having to save presets. For example, if you wanted to compare how two different settings would work on one image, you would just save both settings as different snapshots and compare the two easily without having to save, apply, and then delete presets.

To use snapshots, simply click **Snap 1** or **Snap 2** to save your current settings into memory. Clicking **Recall 1** or **Recall 2** applies the saved settings to the image in much the same way as a preset does. Please note that the snapshots are deleted if you exit out of the current Topaz Simplify window because they are meant to help you in the current Topaz Simplify session only.

## Preset Previews



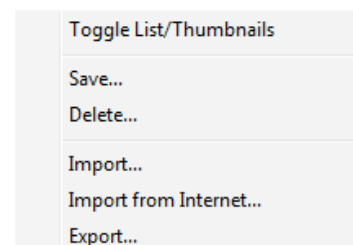
Topaz Simplify v2 includes a small thumbnail above each preset to preview the settings before you apply them to the image. This way you can scroll down the list quickly and see the different previews' results on the image without too many clicks.

If you have many presets and you want to see them as a list without the thumbnails instead, simply select "Toggle List/Thumbnails" from the **Preset...** menu and the thumbnails will be replaced by a list of your available presets.

Click the **Refresh** button to position the preview presets to where your main Topaz Adjust preview is located. If you scroll the main Topaz Adjust preview to a certain location and then press the **Refresh** button again, every preset preview will then jump to that location as well. The presets previews will also zoom to the same degree as the preview window.

## The Presets Menu

Because of the multitude of functions and parameters inside of Topaz Simplify, it's very convenient to be able 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 save the



settings. Then, click on the *Presets* button and click the “**Save...**” 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. Note that you can’t override or delete the default presets that we’ve provided.

The preset you saved will be located in the “Presets” folder of Topaz Simplify, usually at *C:\Program Files\Topaz Labs\Topaz Simplify 2\Presets* unless you’ve opted to install Topaz Simplify into a different directory. Mac users have this folder at *HD/Library/Application Support/Topaz Labs/Simplify 2/Presets*. You’ll notice that in the *Presets* folder there already contains a few preset files. Your preset will be saved as a new file whose filename is the same as your preset name, with a “.tpp” extension. If you like, feel free to share your saved presets by emailing them to your friends and having them put it into their Topaz Simplify Presets folder.

Your new preset is also automatically saved into the Topaz Simplify presets menu and the preview is automatically generated. To apply it later, just click it like any other preset. You may then go through the sliders and tweak them until you’re satisfied with the settings for that particular image.

If you’d like to delete a preset, use the **Delete** option with your desired preset selected.

To import a preset file, click the **Import** button. This will open up a Browse box to import a saved preset from your computer into Topaz Simplify. This is useful if you have downloaded a preset file that you’d like to use.

To import a preset file directly from the Internet, click the **Import from Internet...** button and paste in the exact URL in which the preset file is located.

To export the preset file to a certain location, click “**Export**”. You can then share this file with other users who may then Import it.

## Settings and Parameters

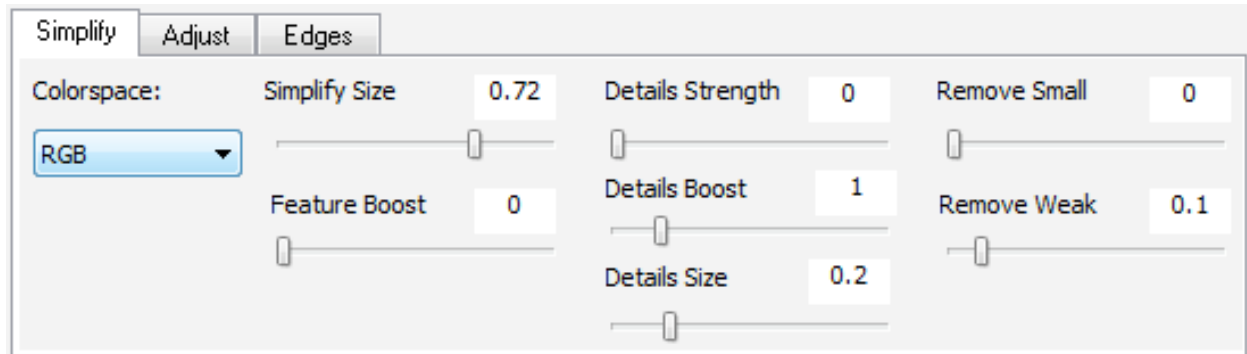
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Topaz Simplify has three main parameter sections: **Simplify**, **Adjust**, and **Edges**. The Simplify tab strategically removes detail from an image to give a pleasing artistic effect. The Adjust tab conveniently modifies the brightness, contrast, 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.

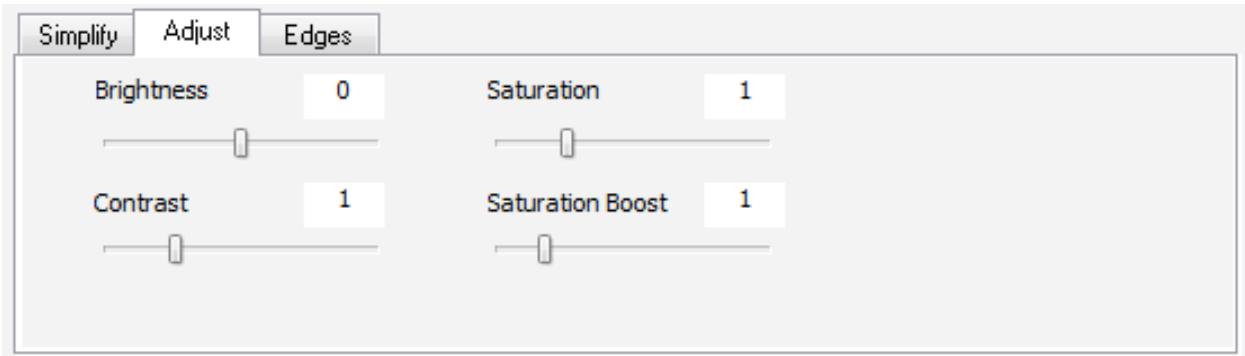
### **Remove Small**

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.

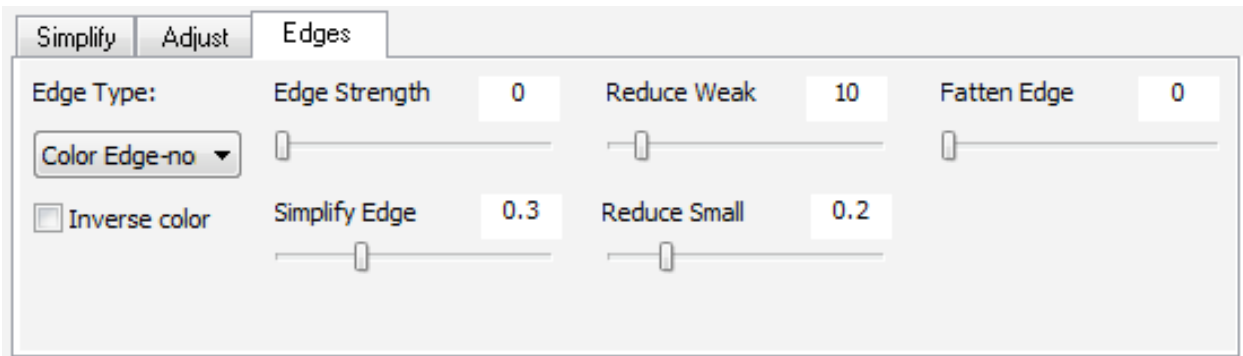
### Saturation

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 image shows the 'Edges' tab in the Topaz Simplify software interface. At the top, there are three tabs: 'Simplify', 'Adjust', and 'Edges', with 'Edges' being the active tab. Below the tabs, the interface is organized into several sections. On the left, there is a dropdown menu for 'Edge Type' currently set to 'Color Edge-no', and a checkbox for 'Inverse color' which is unchecked. To the right of these are five sliders with numerical value boxes. 'Edge Strength' is set to 0, 'Reduce Weak' is set to 10, 'Fatten Edge' is set to 0, 'Simplify Edge' is set to 0.3, and 'Reduce Small' is set to 0.2. Each slider has a small handle that can be moved along the track.

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.

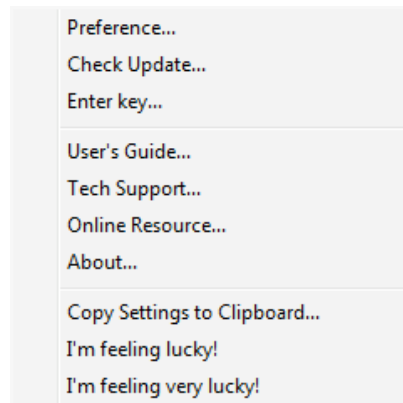
### **Fatten Edge**

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



# Menu

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Access Topaz Simplify's menu by clicking on the **Menu...** button in the bottom right corner of the filter.

The **I'm feeling very lucky!** button takes every single parameter in the exposure, detail, and color tabs and immediately randomizes them. Usually this tends to give some pretty extreme results but can be fun or even inspiring to play with. The **I'm feeling lucky!** button only randomizes the current tab.

Click the **Copy Settings to Clipboard...** button to automatically generate forum- or email-friendly text of your current settings. This is useful when you want to share your current settings but don't want to deal with saving and exporting presets.

**About...** shows you your current version of Topaz Simplify and lists the homepage <http://www.topazlabs.com>.

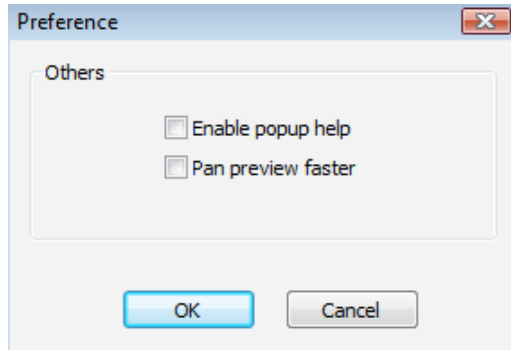
**Online Resource...** brings you to the Topaz Simplify homepage where we have video tutorials and suggestions available for your immediate viewing.

**User's Guide...** brings up the document you're currently reading.

**Enter Key...** to enter a license key or 30-day extension for this product. If you've already entered a full-version license key, feel free to ignore this button.

**Check Update...** checks the current version of Topaz Simplify installed on your computer to the version on the server. If there's a new version available, Topaz Simplify will tell you after you click this button.

**Preference...** brings up a menu where you can adjust the visual color scheme and a couple of other options:



Every setting in the **Preference** window is saved for future use of Topaz Simplify. In order to change one of these preferences, simply access this menu again.

**Enable popup help** gives tooltip reminders and tips when hovering your mouse over certain areas of the filter. Turn this off if you're finding that they impede your work.

**Pan preview faster** affects the panning speed of the Topaz Simplify preview.

The Mac version of Adjust Simplify has a new Preferences setting, **Disable Multi-Processor Support** (not shown above), which allows users to disable multi-processor support. When multi-processor support is disabled for Topaz Simplify, Topaz Simplify runs slower, but it avoids any potential conflict with Intel multi-core processing support, which is known for causing some problem for Mac Application plug-ins.

# Shortcut Keys

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Topaz Simplify uses some shortcut keys to speed up your workflow. Many of these key are similar to those in Photoshop. The following key works at all time:

SPACEBAR	View original image.
CTRL-1	Recall Snapshot 1
CTRL-2	Recall Snapshot 2
ALT-1	Capture Snapshot 1
ALT-2	Capture Snapshot 2
CTRL-R	Reset Current Tab
CTRL-ALT-R	Reset All
CTRL-0	Zoom to Fit
CTRL-ALT-0	Zoom to 100%
+ or CTRL-+	Zoom In
- or CTRL- -	Zoom Ou

**For Mac users:** use CMD key instead in place of CTRL key.

In addition, if a parameter slider is in focus (usually by clicking on it), you can use the following key to change its value:

Left arrow or up arrow	Reduce value by 0.01
Right arrow or down arrow	Increase value by 0.01
Page up key	Reduce value by 0.1
Page down key	Increase value by 0.1
Home key	Set the value to minimum
End key	Set the value to maximum

Finally, you can use **up arrow** or **down arrow** key to select preset when the preset preview pan is in focus.

# Using Topaz Simplify

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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/>.

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# Troubleshooting

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## **“I need a Topaz Simplify trial key.”**

Please visit <http://www.topazlabs.com/evalkey> for a trial key. Check your Spam folder since the auto-email sometimes get filtered out by your Spam filter.

If you need more time to evaluate, please email us at [support@topazlabs.com](mailto: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 2\Plugins. Right click the file “tlsimplify2.8bf” 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 tlsimplify2.8bf 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 2/Plugins and right click Topaz\_simplify2.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\_simplify2.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 2”* 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.

### **“I can't print the image!”**

If you are an Mac user, this is probably because you are running Adjust Simplify in multi-processor support mode, and this is a known issue which may be caused by conflicts with Intel multi-core support library. A workaround solution to this problem is to disable multi-processor support in Adjust Simplify. To do this, go to Menu->Preferences, and check **Disable Multi-Processor Support** checkbox. You need to exit Photoshop and restart Photoshop, in order for the change to take effect.

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