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## WELCOME

Thank you for purchasing Blow Up from Alien Skin Software! We have worked hard to simplify the process of cropping, resizing and sharpening photos for printing. In addition to being the sharpest image enlarging technique around, Blow Up handles a wide range of other resizing tasks. You can use Blow Up's batch capability to quickly downsize all of your photos for the web or automatically Smart Crop your digital photos for any print size in one simple step. The new "sharpening for output" feature automatically selects the right sharpening level for the web or for your specific inkjet paper. And we now provide you with a way to minimize JPEG compression artifacts so you can print images from the web that look clean and sharp.

## OTHER SOURCES OF HELP

This manual is just one of many sources of help for Blow Up. Once you start Blow Up, check out the **Help** menu for links to lots of helpful parts of our web site, including video tutorials. The video tutorial on getting started is a great one to watch before you run Blow Up for the first time. Also watch the text at the bottom of the Blow Up window to learn about whatever your cursor is near.

## WHAT'S NEW

- The Blow Up user interface has been redesigned significantly. Now the **Settings Tab** is the starting point for easy image resizing. Just find the size, resolution, and output format in the list and Blow Up handles all of the rest. Blow Up automatically adjusts the setting to fit the orientation of your image (portrait or landscape), Smart Cropping automatically finds a sensible crop, and the right level of sharpening is applied to match your output medium. If you want to tweak the results, go to the **Controls Tab** where you can adjust the sharpening level, add photographic grain, remove compression artifacts or soften the texture regions.
- We added two cropping tools to Blow Up. The Crop to Size Tool is an easy way to crop and resize to a specific output size at the same time.
- Blow Up can now resize up to the limits of Photoshop's image dimensions, which is 300,000 pixels. Of course, a square image that big would choke Photoshop, but if you need to make a billboard or a bus wrap and Photoshop can handle the image, now Blow Up can too.
- The preview can now be zoomed out.
- There is now a batch processing version of Blow Up. This is easier than using Photoshop actions to process many photos at once.

## FINDING BLOW UP

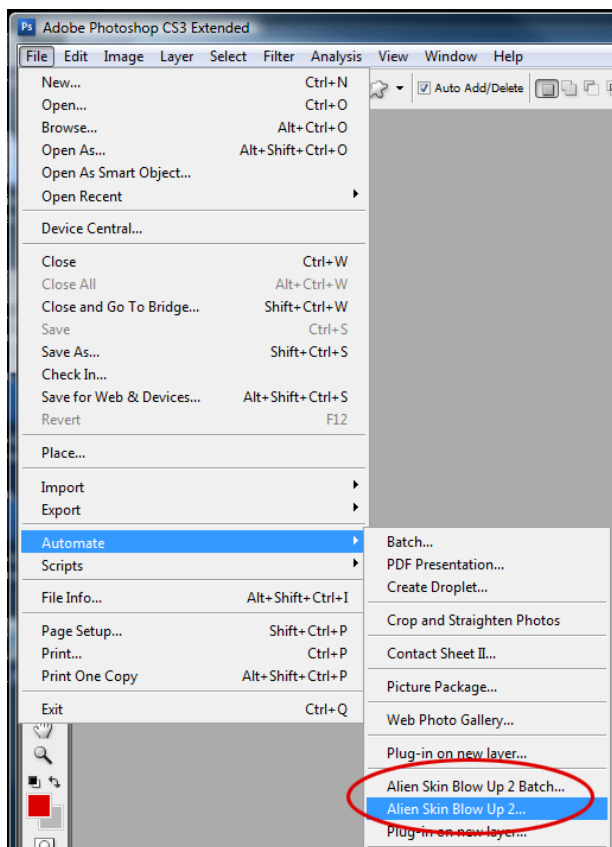
Blow Up is an automation plug-in, not a filter. You won't find it in the Filter menu! In Photoshop, you can find Blow Up in the menu:

**File>Automate>Alien Skin Blow Up 2**

In Photoshop Elements, you can find Blow Up in the menu:

**File>Automation Tools>Alien Skin Blow Up 2**

You will also see an entry for **Alien Skin Blow Up 2 Batch**. Get to know the simple version of Blow Up before you use the batch version. The batch version is for processing entire folders of images.



## INSTALLATION

You probably already have Blow Up installed, but just in case, here is how to do it.

Shut down your graphics host program (Photoshop or Photoshop Elements).

Run the installer found on the CD or that you downloaded.

You will be asked to enter the username and password of an account with administrator privileges. If you don't have administrator privileges, talk to your IT gal or consult your Mac OS or Windows manual.

After the license agreement screen, you will see a list of compatible graphics programs on your computer. Choose one and click OK. If you want to install into another graphics program, just run the installer again.

## ACTIVATION

Blow Up has an activation system that works just like the one in Photoshop. Until Blow Up is activated, each time it starts it will ask you to activate. Activation is a very quick and easy process in which Blow Up lets our activation server know that your license code is in use. This only needs to be done once. Blow Up does not talk to our activation server again after it has been activated. No personal information is sent other than the license code.

You can use Blow Up for up to 30 days without activating. After that, Blow Up will stop working until you activate it.

You can have Blow Up activated on up to two computers at once, so you can have it on both your laptop and desktop computers. If you ever get rid of your computer, don't forget to deactivate Blow Up first! You can do that by going to the menu entry **Help>Deactivate**. Then you can activate Blow Up on a new computer.

## UNDERSTANDING DPI

300 dpi is often considered the standard resolution for most printing. We have gotten excellent results printing between 180 and 360 dpi. If you go below 180 dpi, the image quality will degrade and above 360 dpi it is extremely difficult to notice any improvements even with a magnification device. Some printers give clearer results for resolutions that are a multiple of 60, so we recommend that you stick to 180, 240, 300 and 360 dpi.

Most of our presets generate results at 300dpi. Some of the larger format presets are also available at 180dpi in case you want to decrease file size. If you know the printed picture will be viewed from a distance, the 180dpi version might be right for you. An extreme example is a billboard or car wrap. You don't need to make an 8 foot by 12 foot poster at 300dpi! If the viewer will be very far away, go with a very low dpi so you won't end up dealing with a painfully large file. For such extremely large photos, consult the person who operates the large format printer to find out what dpi to use.

If you have ever looked into buying an inkjet printer, the resolution is often advertised as dpi (dots per inch). For example, the Epson R2400 is advertised to have a 5760 x 1440 resolution. This number refers to the density of droplets of individual colors that the printer can produce, but many of these together form a single pixel. Stick to something like 300dpi. Blow Up can certainly make 1440dpi images, but they are huge files and you really won't be able to see detail beyond about 300dpi.

## OUTPUT SHARPENING

When you print a pixel on paper, it spreads out. The amount it spreads depends on the paper type. This is why it is useful to sharpen a photo before printing it. Our presets are named after the output medium and sharpen accordingly: Screen Sharpened, Inkjet Glossy, Inkjet Luster, or Inkjet Matte. If your photo is destined for print, choose the preset named after the paper type (glossy, luster, matte) to get the proper amount of output sharpening. If you are sending the photo to a service bureau that will do their own output sharpening, use the Screen Sharpened preset. Screen Sharpened does the least sharpening. If you want to customize output sharpening or turn it off altogether, switch to the Control Tab and look for the controls near the bottom of the list.

## USER INTERFACE OVERVIEW

Below is a screen shot of the Blow Up 2 user interface from a Windows computer. The Mac version has all the same gizmos in the same places, just more shiny in a few spots. The **Settings Tab** and **Controls Tab** are explained in later sections of the manual.

Note, when Blow Up starts up in a new session, the Pixel Dimensions and Image Size values are set to the dimensions of the original document. Other controls such as the sliders and output sharpening will be remembered from the last time Blow Up was applied as will the document size **units** for width, height and resolution. Blow Up will also remember the last tab you were using when it restarts with a different image.



### A: TITLE BAR

The title bar displays the currently selected setting (see **Settings Tab** section, below).

### B: MENUS

Command menus are accessible when you launch Blow Up. Macintosh users will see the menus in place of their usual menu bar. Windows users will see the menus at the top of the plug-in window.



## Edit Menu

The Edit menu provides an unlimited ability to undo or redo changes. If you experiment with the sliders and find that you prefer a previous group of settings, select the Undo command from the Edit menu or click Command+Z (Control+Z on Windows) to back up as many times as necessary. The Edit menu also lets you copy, cut, and paste values from parameter fields.

Clicking Edit>Preferences lets you change UpToDate settings. The **UpToDate** system informs you about the latest Alien Skin Software products, special offers, software updates and other news. When a new message is ready, a button will appear at the top of the user interface labeled "Click here for new messages from Alien Skin".

## View Menu

The View menu lets you zoom the preview in and out. To display the entire image in the preview window, select Fit On Screen. To display the preview at 100% magnification, select Actual Pixels. See **Keyboard Shortcuts** for some nifty zooming shortcuts. See the **Previewing** section for more information on zooming.

## Help Menu

From the Help menu you can read the PDF manual (this document). The same assistance can be reached by pressing F1 (Windows) or Help (Macintosh).

There are Help menu entries that go to the following places on our Web site:

- Video Tutorials
- Blow Up Product Web Page
- Alien Skin Software's Home Page
- Online Forums
- Support Knowledgebase
- UpToDate Messages

From the Help menu you can Activate or Deactivate the locally installed copy of Blow Up. See the **Activation** section earlier in this document for more information.

## C: RESIZING SUMMARY

This shows the original and resized pixel values. In parentheses, the percentage change in number of pixels and the scale factor per side are shown.

## D: UPTODATE MESSAGE INDICATOR

When you see this visual cue, you have a new message from Alien Skin Software.

## E: PREVIEW CONTROLS

### Preview Tools (only one at a time is active)

Click the magnifying glass to enable the **Zoom Tool**. Then you can click in the preview window to zoom into the image up to 100% zoom. Option+click to zoom out (Alt+click for Windows). Double-clicking the magnifying glass at any time resets the preview window to 100% magnification. While in zoom mode, holding down the spacebar temporarily switches to the **Move Tool**.

Click the hand to enable the **Move Tool**. Then click and drag in the preview to move around the image.

Click the **Standard Crop Tool** to enable cropping. Then click and drag the mouse in the preview to create a rectangular crop area. The crop area you choose controls how large the output image is.

Click the **Crop To Size Tool** to enable cropping. Then click and drag the mouse in the preview to create a rectangular crop area. The crop area will be resized to whatever size is specified in the **Controls Tab**.

#### Preview Buttons

The **Clear Crop** button (only active when cropping) removes the crop area.

The **Actual Pixels** button sets the zoom rate to 100%. This is the best way to take a close look at image quality before hitting OK.

The **Fit Screen** button fits the image to the size of the preview window.

### F: OK AND CANCEL BUTTONS

Clicking **OK** resizes the document with the current settings. Clicking **Cancel** closes Blow Up without changing the document.

### G: SETTINGS AND CONTROLS TABS

The **Settings Tab** lets you easily choose a standard output size. The **Controls Tab** lets you take complete control of the resizing process. The next sections discuss these areas in detail.

### H: PREVIEW AREA

This is where the finished resized image is shown. Depending on whether the **Zoom Tool**, **Move Tool**, or one of the **Crop Tools** is active, clicking or dragging in the preview area will have different effects.

### I: NAVIGATION THUMBNAIL

The **Navigation Thumbnail** is a copy of your image in the lower left corner of the Blow Up window. The red rectangle in the thumbnail indicates the part of your image that is being displayed in the **Preview**. To move the preview area, simply click anywhere in the **Navigation Thumbnail**. This is the easiest way to navigate around large images.

### J: MOUSEOVER HELP AREA

As you mouse over most parts of the Blow Up window, short, helpful descriptions appear here.

### K: ZOOM LEVEL INDICATOR

The current zoom level is shown here. Note that this zoom level has nothing to do with how much the final image is resized! That information is in the far upper left of the user interface. 100% indicates the actual pixels or 1:1.

## KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Shortcut Function	Macintosh	Windows
Navigate to Next Control	Tab	Tab
Navigate to Previous Control	Shift+Tab	Shift+Tab
OK	Return	Enter
Cancel	Escape	Escape
Undo	⌘+Z	Ctrl+Z
Redo	⌘+Y	Ctrl+Y
Cut	⌘+X	Ctrl+X
Copy	⌘+C	Ctrl+C
Paste	⌘+V	Ctrl+V
Zoom In	⌘++	Ctrl++
Zoom Out	⌘+-	Ctrl+ -
Actual Pixels	Option+⌘+Zero	Alt+Ctrl+Zero
Fit on Screen	⌘+Zero	Ctrl+Zero
Load Factory Default Setting	⌘+R	F5
Load Last Used Setting	⌘+L	Ctrl+L
Save Setting	⌘+S	Ctrl+S
Switch to Move Tool (hand)	H	H
Switch to Zoom Tool	Z	Z
Switch to Crop Tool	C	C
Switch to Crop to Size Tool	S	S
Preview Move (with zoom enabled)	Space Bar+Drag	Space Bar+Drag
Zoom In (with zoom enabled)	Mouse Click	Left Mouse Click
Zoom In (with move enabled)	⌘+Click	Ctrl+Click
Zoom Out	Option + Mouse Click	Alt + Mouse Click
Drag preview (with zoom enabled) – also displays original image	Hold spacebar while dragging	Hold spacebar while dragging
Zoom to Actual Pixels	Double-click Zoom Tool	Double-click Zoom Tool
Increase/Decrease Slider by 1	Up/Down Arrow	Up/Down Arrow
Increase/Decrease Slider by 10	Shift+Up/Down Arrow	Shift+Up/Down Arrow
Access Online Help	⌘+/ or Help	F1
Open Preferences Dialog	⌘+K	Ctrl+K

## PREVIEWING



Blow Up's previewing system is modeled after Photoshop, so a lot of the tools and shortcuts that you are already familiar with will work as expected. The Preview Tools are at the top of the preview window. You can select the **Zoom Tool** to zoom in and out. When you select the **Zoom Tool**, it will be set to **Zoom In** by default. If you hold the **Alt** key on Windows or the **Option** key on the Mac, the tool will turn into the **Zoom Out** tool (as in Photoshop). You can quickly go to the 100% zoom level by pressing the **Actual Pixels** button or zoom to a level that fits the entire image in the preview window by pressing the **Fit Screen** button. Note, you can only zoom in up to 100%.

If the image you are previewing is much larger than the preview window and you zoom to 100%, you will only be able to see a limited portion of the image in the display. You can get to different parts of the image by using the **Hand Tool** (press spacebar to temporarily activate) or you can click in the **Navigation Thumbnail** to quickly navigate the image.

When Blow Up is run on a new image, the preview window displays the image resized to fit to the screen. Also, when you select a new setting or crop to size, the image will be automatically zoomed to fit the preview. This will allow you to see the entire image with the cropping rectangle. However, **it is strongly recommended** that you preview your image at 100% (actual pixels) after cropping to get an accurate representation of the final image.

## SETTINGS TAB

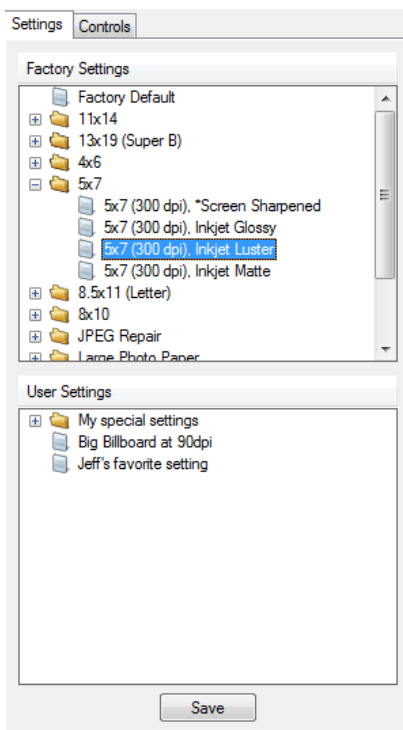
The settings tab allows you to quickly choose an output size and format without worrying about the details of each slider. Settings are also useful for batch processing because you can save the setting for an example image and then apply the same parameters to a folder of images. They are organized by size and output format.

A setting is a snapshot of all of a filter's controls. When you apply a setting, all of the controls on the filter are reset to their remembered values. The Settings tab lets you create, manage, and share your favorite settings. There are two lists on the Settings tab. The top list contains factory settings. Factory settings are supplied with the product and can't be changed. The bottom list contains user settings, which are settings you can create yourself.

There are a number of folders for standard sizes including 4x6, 5x7, 8x10, etc. After you choose an output size, select the setting in that folder that matches your output medium: Screen Sharpened, Inkjet Glossy, Inkjet Luster, or Inkjet Matte. The choice of medium controls how much output sharpening is performed, with Screen Sharpened being the least.

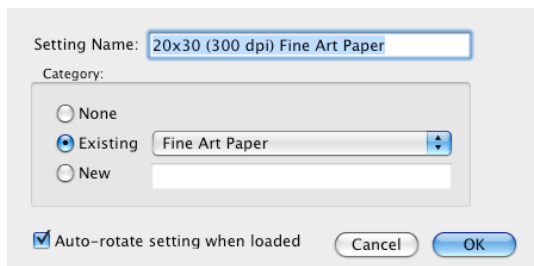
## LOADING SETTINGS

When you click on a setting, all of the parameters associated with that setting are loaded into the program and the image is resized in the preview window. All of the **Factory Settings** have **Smart Crop** enabled. If the proportions of your image do not fit the proportions of the



setting exactly (the aspect ratio is off), Blow Up will automatically activate crop mode and find a suitable crop area. Additionally, the zoom level will adjust so the crop area fits in the preview window. Once the crop area is loaded, you will have the opportunity to adjust the placement of the crop to a more suitable region if you wish. You may also override the crop and the setting by resizing the crop area. See the section on **Cropping** for more information on how cropping works.

## SAVING SETTINGS



Setting Name:

Category:

☐ None

☒ Existing

☐ New

☒ Auto-rotate setting when loaded

To save a setting, first adjust the sliders and other filter controls to your satisfaction. Then, click the **Save Button** at the bottom of the **Settings Tab**. You can also save a setting by pressing Command+S (Macintosh) or Control+S (Windows). The Save Setting dialog box will appear. There you can specify the name and category of the new setting. There is also an Auto-Rotate checkbox.

Auto-rotate allows your setting to automatically match the orientation of the image you are loading. For example, if you have a setting saved with a width of 5 inches and a height of 7 inches (portrait orientation) but load an image with a width of 7 inches and a height of 5 inches (landscape orientation), the setting will automatically be applied in landscape orientation. However, if you want to fix the width and height and by-pass the automatic rotation (e.g. you are saving for web), turn off this checkbox. When a setting is loaded with the auto-rotate feature enabled, it will be indicated in the title bar next to the setting name.

## MODIFYING SETTINGS

To rename, delete, or change the category of a setting you have saved, right-click on it (Windows) or Control-click on it (Macintosh). That brings up a little menu of options.

## CONTROL TAB

### PIXEL DIMENSIONS

**Pixel Dimensions** are usually used for images destined for the Web or digital display. The top border of the **Pixel Dimensions** section displays the amount of memory needed to hold the original and new image. If you notice that the new memory size is gigantic, check your **Resolution** to make sure it is reasonable.

### RESET BUTTON

The **Reset** button will reset the image dimensions back to the original size (pixel dimensions and document size). It will clear any crop that is active. It will not change the slider values or sharpening settings.

### DOCUMENT SIZE

For images destined for print, the most intuitive way to specify their size is in the **Document Size** section. This section uses real world units like inches and centimeters. **Resolution** is important for print quality. High quality printing typically requires 300 pixels/inch. Images viewed from a large distance may be okay with much lower resolution.

### CONSTRAIN PROPORTIONS (CHECKBOX AND MODE)

Selecting **Constrain Proportions** ensures that changing height proportionally changes width and vice versa. If you turn this option off, your image will be potentially retargeted to a new aspect ratio or cropped. In this case, you will be given an option for the retargeting method:

- **Smart Crop** will find a crop area automatically that fits the characteristics of the image. It works by looking for detail in the image and will intelligently center the crop area on those important details. We recommend that you use this mode by default if you plan on retargeting a number of images in batch processing mode.
- **Centered Crop** selects a crop area that is centered in the image.
- **Stretch** will distort the image vertically or horizontally to fit the new aspect ratio. This is almost always an unattractive option and should be rarely used.

The screenshot shows the 'Controls' tab in a software interface. It is divided into several sections:

- Pixel Dimensions:** Shows 'Width' as 766 and 'Height' as 900. A 'Reset' button is to the right. Above these fields, it says 'Pixel Dimensions: 1.9M (from 504.9K)'.
- Document Size:** Contains three rows: 'Width' (200.00) with a 'percent' dropdown, 'Height' (200.00) with a 'percent' dropdown, and 'Resolution' (72.00) with a 'pixels/inch' dropdown.
- Constrain Proportions:** A checked checkbox followed by a 'Smart Crop' dropdown menu.
- Sharpening Settings:** Four sliders with numeric values: 'Sharpen Edges' (25), 'Add Grain' (15), 'Preserve Natural Texture' (0), and 'Remove Compression Artifacts' (0).
- Sharpening for Output Device:** A dropdown menu set to 'Screen (web)' and another dropdown set to 'Low'.
- Custom Sharpening Radius:** A slider with a value of 0.85.
- Duplicate Image Before Resizing:** An unchecked checkbox.

## SHARPEN EDGES

The **Sharpen Edges** slider is designed to counteract softening caused by enlargement. If your original image is blurry, this slider will not fix that. In that case you could do additional sharpening with the controls at the bottom of the window for **Sharpening for Output Device**.

## ADD GRAIN

Extreme enlargement and sharpening can result in an overly smooth image that looks like plastic. Adding some artificial film grain can provide a surprisingly realistic illusion of detail. Usually you only need to consider adding grain when your image is being enlarged over 200%. As with any effect, you should make it so subtle that most viewers will not know you did anything. Start by increasing **Add Grain** until you can see the grain. Then back the effect off until you can barely tell the grain is there.

## PRESERVE NATURAL TEXTURE

When the source image is small enough and contains small scale textures, the enlargement can result in “crinkle” artifacts. By increasing the natural texture slider, these artifacts often disappear and the texture will look more natural.

## REMOVE COMPRESSION ARTIFACTS

If the source image was taken from the web, it might have artifacts due to JPEG compression. When the image is enlarged, these artifacts are often amplified. The **Remove Compression Artifacts** slider will help to smooth compression halos and remove the blocky JPEG artifacts. In most cases, you will get the best results by using a low value for this slider to reduce the worst of the compression artifacts. If you set the value too high the image will lose detail and appear “painterly”. Also, we recommend that you “add grain” in conjunction with this slider to counteract the softening effects.

## SHARPENING FOR OUTPUT DEVICE

In order to improve the resizing workflow, we have added the ability to sharpen for your output format. The **Edge Sharpening** slider compensates for softening caused by enlargement. In contrast, **Output Sharpening** is an additional sharpening step that is used to sharpen for your specific output device (printer/paper type or screen). Different paper types require different levels of sharpening so we have determined reasonable values for some standard inkjet paper types. You can also have more control over this type of sharpening by using the custom setting.

We use a variation on Unsharp Masking to do output sharpening. This technique improves the standard unsharp masking by minimizing the color bleeding that occurs when unsharp masking is applied separately to each RGB channel. When you select an output medium, you are selecting a predetermined radius for sharpening. By selecting **Custom**, you can choose your own radius with the activated slider. The amount of sharpening can be set by choosing one of the low/medium/high dropdown options.

We have done the research for you and found the best settings for some standard output



formats. In addition, Blow Up automatically adjusts the sharpening level based on the dpi of your image. Here are the modes we provide:

- **None.** No output sharpening is applied.
- **Screen (web).** You are going to post your images on a web page or view them on screen. This is appropriate if you are sending your prints to a lab which does sharpening automatically in the print driver.
- **Inkjet, Matte Paper.** Appropriate for standard Matte 80 paper.
- **Inkjet, Luster Paper.** Appropriate for most Luster paper types. Luster is in between matte and glossy.
- **Inkjet, Glossy Paper.** Appropriate for most glossy paper types.
- **Custom.** You must enter the sharpening radius yourself.

***An important tip about previewing results with output sharpening:***

The levels of output sharpening for print will produce results that look **over-sharpened** on the screen. This is ok; in fact, they should look a little “crunchy” on the screen to produce sharp prints. If you want to get an estimate of how they will look when printed, just select “Screen” as the mode for previewing. Once you have the parameters set to your liking, then choose a print format and apply the setting.

**DUPLICATE IMAGE BEFORE RESIZING**

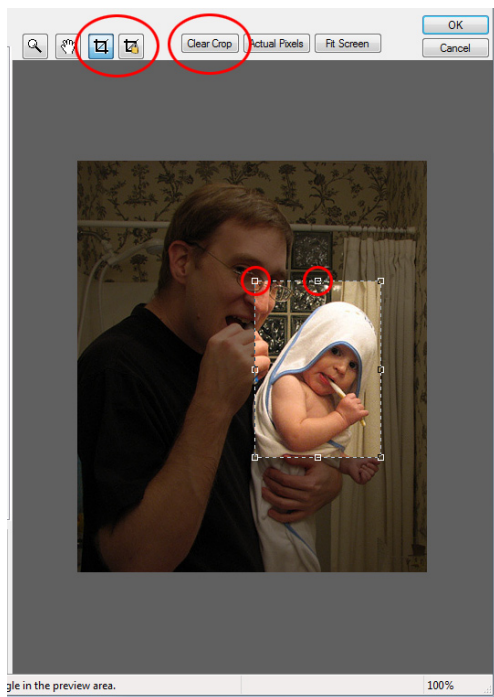
If this checkbox is on then a copy of your image will be resized, leaving your original image untouched. Otherwise your image will be resized in place.

## CROPPING

The ability to crop is a new feature for Blow Up 2. This feature is particularly important because it allows settings to be loaded which have different proportions (aspect ratio) than the original image and also facilitates batch processing.

Cropping can be activated in two different ways:

- **Manually** when you select a crop tool and create a crop area.
- **Automatically** when **Constrain Proportions** is off, an automatic crop method is selected (**Smart Crop** or **Centered Crop**), and the image dimensions differ in aspect ratio from the original image.



## CREATING AND MODIFYING THE CROP REGION

When manually cropping, start dragging a rectangle in the preview area and you will see the crop rectangle form. Once a crop area is active (see screenshot), there are several ways to control the crop area:

- Move the crop area. When the mouse is over the crop area just click and drag the crop area. The crop area will stay inside the image.
- Resize the crop area. Drag the corner or side handles of the crop area to resize. If you are in the **Crop to Size Tool**, the resized crop area will be fixed to the aspect ratio specified by the **Width** and **Height** fields.
- Cancel the crop. To get rid of the current crop area, click the **Clear Crop** button. When the crop is cancelled, the image dimensions will return to values that preserve the original aspect ratio of the image.



### Standard Cropping Tool

When you are in the **Standard Crop Tool**, you will notice that the image size will adjust to the crop area that you create. This form of cropping always decreases the image size.



### Crop to Size Tool (Locked Crop)

If you already have the final dimensions of your document in mind (e.g. you want an 8x10 print) and you want to crop the image, **Cropping to Size** will simplify cropping and resizing. In **Crop To Size** mode, the pixels in your crop area will always be resized to the exact dimensions in the Pixel Dimension/Document Size fields. This is contrasted to the standard cropping mode where the pixel dimensions will change in response to the crop area.

In the typical workflow you *first* set the desired resize dimensions and *then* start cropping. Just follow these simple steps:

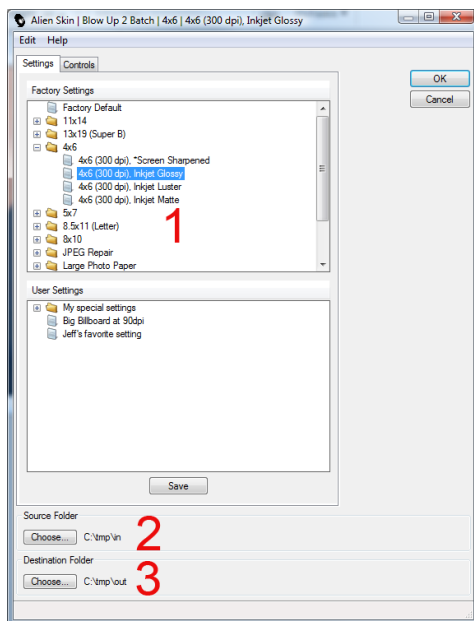
1. Unselect the **Constrain Proportions** checkbox so you can type any width or height value unconstrained. This is not necessary but will allow you to enter any unconstrained values that you choose.
2. Select either **Smart Crop** or **Centered Crop** mode.
3. Enter the desired final output dimensions in either the **Pixel Dimensions** or **Document Size** fields.
4. Adjust the size or position of the crop rectangle in the preview area.

A starting crop will automatically be created for you and you can choose to move or resize it. You will notice that when you move the corners of the crop area, the crop rectangle shape will be constrained to the shape of the final resize dimensions and that the resize dimensions will not change. Also, since the pixels inside the crop area are changing (they are being interpolated), the preview zoom level might change to keep the crop rectangle in the preview window (the view might jump slightly). Once you have found the desired crop area, it is recommended that you view your image at 100% zoom (actual pixels view) since you might be zoomed out significantly.

## BATCH PROCESSING

To run Blow Up 2 in Batch processing mode, select (**File>Automate>Alien Skin Blow Up 2 Batch**). The batch plug-in has both the settings and control tab much like the normal, interactive Blow Up plug-in, but there is no preview window. Instead there are two controls for selecting the source and destination folders for your images. You can resize all the images in a **folder** to a fixed size with 3 simple steps:

1. Select the size you want to resize your image to. If the size you desire is listed in the **Settings Tab**, just click on it and move on to the next step. If you want to enter a custom size then click the **Control Tab** and specify the new dimensions of the images.
2. Select the source **folder** of the images you want to resize. All of the images in the folder (that are supported) will be resized.
3. Select the destination folder. If you want to create a new folder, you can do so by pressing the “create folder” button in the dialog.



If you select the same folder as the source, a warning dialog will appear saying that you will overwrite the original images and lose information. This is usually a dangerous way to work.

**We recommend that you always have different source and destination folders.**

There are limitations on the types of files supported. Images in the following formats will be skipped:

- BMP, RAW and GIF images
- Any image in indexed color mode

When the resized image is saved, the original settings will be preserved, such as JPEG compression level.

## ACTIONS

If you just need to resize a folder of images, Blow Up's batch processing plug-in is much easier than using a Photoshop action. But if you need to do some resizing as part of a multi-step action, read this section.

Blow Up can be recorded and played back in a Photoshop action. For basic information on how to record an action and then apply it to batches of images, **see Photoshop's documentation.**

If you are familiar with how Photoshop's Image Size command is recorded, then using Blow Up with actions will be very familiar to you. Blow Up behaves just like the Image Size command.

The following are always recorded in a Blow Up action:

- Constrain Proportions checkbox
- Duplicate Image Before Resizing checkbox
- Sharpen Amount value
- Add Grain value
- Preserve Natural Texture value
- Remove Compression Artifacts value
- Sharpening for Output Device values

In contrast, Pixel Dimensions or Document Size information are only recorded if you edit Width, Height, or Resolution.

When recording an action, it is important to carefully choose the parameters you edit. If you edit a Pixel Dimensions parameter, the action records the change in pixel units. If you edit a Document Size parameter, the action records the change in the selected physical units such as inches or picas. This choice will have a large impact on the action output. If the action is recorded in physical units, then the resolution of the image will be taken into account.