

Portraiture Creating and Editing

Aaron Taylor
Aaron Taylor Photography LLC

Who Am I?

Owner of Aaron Taylor Photography LLC

- Family portraits
- Seniors
- Weddings and events
- Business and social media
- Headshots
- Education and mentoring

Writer for Improve Photography from March 2016 to March 2017

Featured on Shutterfly's "Family Photo Ideas"

Co-creator and writer for Photographers' Cooperative

My Story

- Began about three years ago in Maryland
 - Teaching high school English, about to welcome a second child
- Offered free sessions to teacher co-workers
November 2014
 - Realized that I had so much to learn
- Consumed LR, podcasts, building website
- Launched company in March 2015
- Winter 2016 began with IP
- Came to Columbus June 2016
- Networked with as many as I could
 - Columbus Moms Blog
- Here I am at Westbridge

My Approach to Portraiture

On-location and post-processing
Some of my favorites



Canon 6D
Canon 100mm
f/2.8L macro IS

f/4.5
1/200
ISO640

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PHOTO**



Crop

Exposure

Skin highlights

Catchlights

Vignette

Darkness under
eyes

Retouched a
few hairs

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Adjustment Brushes

Dodge (lighten)

Burn (darken)

Dodge + Shadows +25

Highlights -25

Highlights -50

Shadows +25

Shadows +50

Eye Enhance

- Exposure +0.15
- Contrast +8
- Clarity +23
- Saturation +18
- Sharpness +25

Amount 25

Hair Definition

- Exposure +0.07
- Contrast +24
- Clarity +30
- Saturation +7
- Sharpness +10

Amount 30

Whiten Teeth

- Temp -4
- Contrast +12
- Saturation -20

Amount 20

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Feather 25- 40
Flow 100
Size as necessary with brackets

Canon T3i
50mm f/1.4

f/3.2
1/160
ISO400



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Crop and straighten

Increase contrast

Increase temp from 5200 to 6950

Lower whites, increase blacks

Increase vibrance and saturation

Burn/dehaze boy with glasses a bit

Use “iris enhance” on eyes



Canon 6D
Canon 100mm
f/2.8L macro IS

f/2.8
1/160
ISO400

Reflector held in
her arms

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Import preset

Sync settings from session (cool down temp, tiny exposure boost, lower highlights, medium tone curve contrast)

Crop

Skin highlights (lower whites)

Iris enhance

Hair definition

Boosted shadows around eye

Increase exposure on shadow side of face

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Import Preset

Tone Curve Medium Contrast (Tone Curve panel)

Lens Profile Corrections (Lens Corrections panel)

Vignette Highlight Priority -10 (Effect panel)

Sharpening (Detail panel)

- Amount 25
- Radius 1
- Detail 25
- Masking 70

Something I don't always remember is my color calibration.

I use the Colorchecker Passport, and I do have custom color profiles for my camera.

I more often use the Colorchecker in difficult white balance situations or when accurate color and white balance is a priority.

Image Critique

Photos of mine I'd like to could improve.



What a difficult shot to compose!

So many elements to keep from intruding on each other.

Paying close attention to **framing**



Difficult
exposure due
to bright
background

I exposed for
skin, which
**blew out the
highlights** in
the
background

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**Composition
and
expression**

Depth-of-field
too
shallow--infant
out of focus

Multiple **white
balance color
temperatures**

Noise!

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Pose almost works--bring in a little tighter

White balance too much magenta



Would benefit
from
dodging and
burning

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The little
details...

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Missed my
focus but I
still love the
expression



Nailed **focus**,
wish this was
candid but
still love the
smiles

My Approach, Round 2

Family Sessions and Headshots



Canon 6D
Canon
24-70mm f/2.8L
version ii

24mm
f/4
1/160
ISO200

*Upon Import
with a custom
preset*

*(tone curve
Medium
contrast,
sharpening, lens
profile
correction,
vignette)*

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Why share?

Go wide!



Canon 6D
Canon 100mm
f/2.8L macro IS

f/6.3
1/80
ISO1000

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Canon 6D
Canon 100mm
f/2.8L macro IS

f/6.3
1/80
ISO400

Bounce flash

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Canon 6D
Canon 100mm f/2.8L macro IS

f/5.6
1/160
ISO200

Gray seamless taped to the wall
Big 48" octobox with two speedlights just
barely camera-left

Spot removal
Crop
Highlight and white levels down
Even out backdrop
Eye enhance
Desaturate
Explain editing with Tone Curve
Matte look
Blue channel curve
Black levels down



Canon 6D
Tamron
28-75mm f/2.8

59mm
f/11
1/200
ISO100

Off-camera flash
with umbrella

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Power of the
adjustment
brush

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Canon 6D
Canon 85mm
f/1.8

f/3.5
1/200
ISO100

Off-camera flash
with umbrella

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Canon 6D
Canon 100mm
f/2.8L macro IS

f/5.6
1/160
ISO160

Same setup as
photo of my
daughter

Import preset
Graduated
filter
Exposure +.3
Spot removal
Eye enhance

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Frequency Separation

An advanced skin-retouching technique in
Photoshop



Upon import

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Lightroom skin
smoothing
brush



Photoshop
frequency
separation

Maintains skin
texture

Blend tones

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Upon import

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One last fix!

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How do you do frequency separation?

Steps in Photoshop

1. Open your portrait
2. Duplicate your the background layer twice
3. Call first duplicate "Blur"
4. Call second duplicate "Detail"
5. Click the "eye" on Detail layer for now so that you can't see it
6. Select Blur layer and Filter → Blur → Gaussian Blur
7. Blur enough so that you can still tell what the image is supposed to be
8. Select Detail layer and Image → Apply Image
9. Layer = Blur; Blending = Subtract; Scale = 2; Offset = 128
10. Detail layer blending mode "Linear Light"
11. Select both Detail and Blur layers, group together, name the group "Skin Retouching"

Create an Action to do this for you!

Technique

Use your Detail layer to retouch

- Adjust opacity of your healing brush to maintain some texture

Use your Blur layer to blend skin tones (most of the work is done here)

- Look for blotchy skin (too much red)
- Look for bright highlights (too much white)
- Use the lasso tool with a 15-20 px feather
- Apply Gaussian Blur with restraint



LR edits before
PS frequency
separation

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Full PS
retouching

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LR edits and
LR skin
smoothing
brush

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LR edits before
PS frequency
separation

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How about a live example?

Frequency Separation

My Company

Photo Sessions

- Family portraits
- Seniors
- Weddings and events
- Business and social media
- Headshots
- Education and mentoring

Education

- One-on-One Mentoring for camera and editing
- Photo Reviews
- Online Mentoring and Skype Sessions
- Plenty of free articles
 - My blog
 - Photographers' Cooperative
 - Improve Photography
 - Columbus Moms Blog
- "Photography for Beginners" PDF download

Contact Info

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@aarontaylor (mix of family life, paid sessions, and personal projects)

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