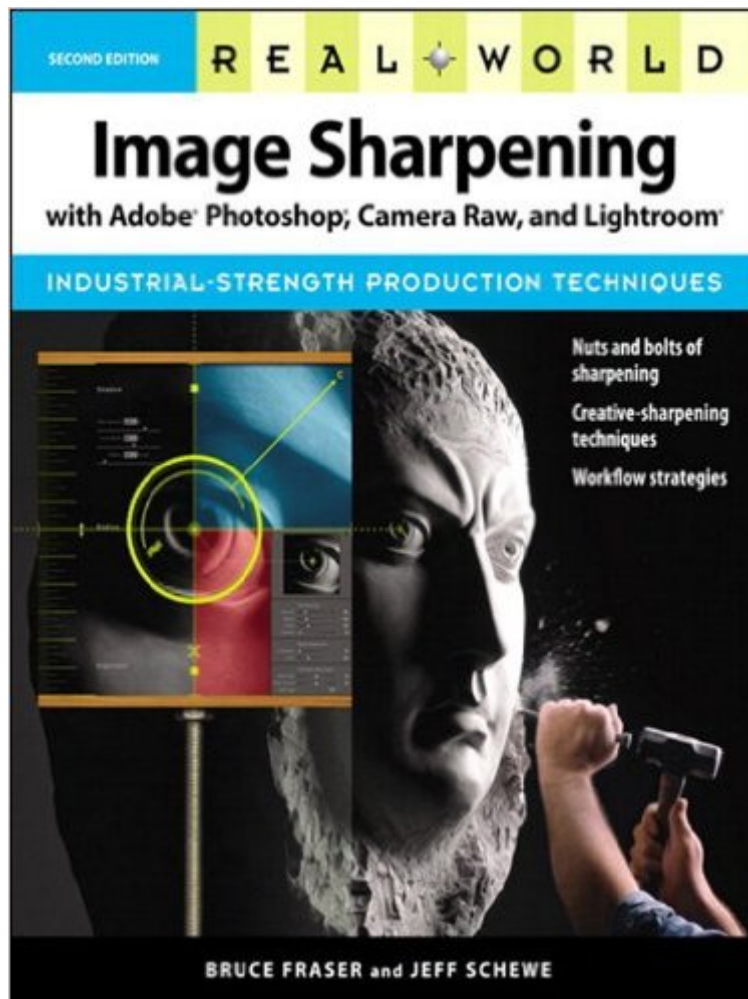


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# Real World Image Sharpening With Adobe Photoshop, Camera Raw, And Lightroom



## Synopsis

Just about every digital image requires sharpening since softness is inevitably introduced during the image digitizing process, and oftentimes with digital photography, images are sharpened badly. This second edition of the definitive book by the late Bruce Fraser teaches readers all they need to know about sharpening, including when to use it, why it's needed, how to use the camera's features, how to recognize an image that needs sharpening, how much to use, what's bad sharpening, and how to fix oversharpening. *Real World Image Sharpening with Adobe Photoshop, Camera Raw, and Lightroom, Second Edition* is written by Fraser's friend and renowned photographer Jeff Schewe. It adds essential coverage of Adobe Photoshop Lightroom and Adobe Camera Raw, since many of the key sharpening functions have migrated from Photoshop to those tools since the first edition of the book was published. The book shows readers how to: recognize the kind of sharpening that each image needs; become acquainted with the full arsenal of sharpening tools built into Photoshop, Lightroom, and Camera Raw; sharpen part of an image selectively; create a complete sharpening workflow that allows sharpening images optimally for different uses; balance the contradictory demands of sharpening and noise reduction; and more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was surprisingly underwhelmed by this book. I am normally a big fan of Jeff Schewe (see my Real World Camera RAW review for example) but this book really missed the mark for me. I really expected the same book layout presented in Real World Camera RAW, that is, a brief overview of the advantages of the proposed process, lots of in-depth examples to show the technical variations, and some additional "advanced" topics to help readers structure an improved process.

Unfortunately, this book was plagued by a lack of focus and a theoretical approach that lacked substance. The book seemed to get lost in esoteric and sometimes confusing examples that are often concluded with summary paragraphs with this basic theme of, "You could do it that way but it's not very good." I was left with the feeling that the authors included numerous examples and provided great detail just to debunk a specific technique. I don't really need 4 pages to get the point, simply recommend that we not use Sharpen or Edge Sharpen and be done with it. My interest was in seeing examples of differing sharpening approaches and the advantages and disadvantages of each. There are a few examples like that in the book, but they are, unfortunately, few and far between. In fact, if you've read Real World Camera RAW, you've actually seen one of the examples already. Perhaps I had false hopes in a book about sharpening focusing primarily on examples. I have no interest in Continuous Tone printing, I do very little Creative Sharpening for the majority of my work, and I only rarely sharpen images for Offset Press.

Save for certain "special effects", sharpness, clarity and smooth tonal gradations are amongst the critical hallmarks of excellent photographs, and go to the heart of what distinguishes photography as an art form. If you never thought that anyone could fill over three hundred pages with technically essential information and instruction about sharpening photographs, think again because here it is, and it's really important for anyone who strives for excellence in their digital imaging work. Much more than a cookbook on how to sharpen a photo (though it does that too), this book, now in its second and expanded edition, describes in a way that's easy to understand the very fundamentals of digital imaging technology and image structure which give rise to the need for a multi-stage and multi-purposed sharpening workflow; from there the authors go on to present in considerable detail the optimal techniques for implementing it, so that those of us who read from cover to cover will understand the basis of the techniques they recommend. Years of experience and experimentation are bundled into these techniques, so one can have every confidence that they work well - as I do

from having used a fair number of them myself. The book should cater to a broad audience because it covers sharpening, smoothing and noise reduction using a number of applications including Lightroom, Camera Raw, Photoshop and several 3rd party applications. Because some of these techniques have elements of repetitive operation image after image, certain parts of the sharpening process can be automated to improve our workflow efficiency. Photoshop has a functionality called "Actions" which permit one to do this.

I consider myself a fairly competent user of Photoshop (PS), Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) which is a plug-in that comes installed in PS, and Lightroom (LR), but one area where I didn't feel post-processing in my bones was image sharpening, which is the process of adjusting images to both overcome the image softness inherent in digital photography and to make artistic adjustments. I'd read the first edition of this book, and understood the difference between capture, creative and output sharpening, but wasn't always sure what those sliders in Unsharp Mask were doing for me. Since that first edition, Adobe had improved the sharpening facilities in ACR and LR. It seemed like visiting the second edition was in order. After explaining what sharpening is and why images need to be sharpened, Schewe, building on the work of the late Bruce Fraser, explains multipass sharpening and the somewhat different approaches taken by the main PS, ACR and LR software. The author then describes each of the tools available and their effects. He then shows the application of each of the tools to a digital workflow in each of the three softwares, and finishes up by showing how to speed up the processes by using actions and presets. Along the way, he also discusses digital noise and its reduction, an area that is intimately linked with sharpening. This is not a subject for the photographer new to post processing. A description of the tools involved may be quite intimidating to the tyro, but ultimately every image processor has to face up to sharpening. Luckily, it seemed to me that Schewe had improved on previous explanations, and he incorporates several graphic techniques that make it clear.

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