

Through The Lens

*A guide to digital photography for computer enthusiasts.
After the click of your camera, you're only half done!*

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Fun with filters!

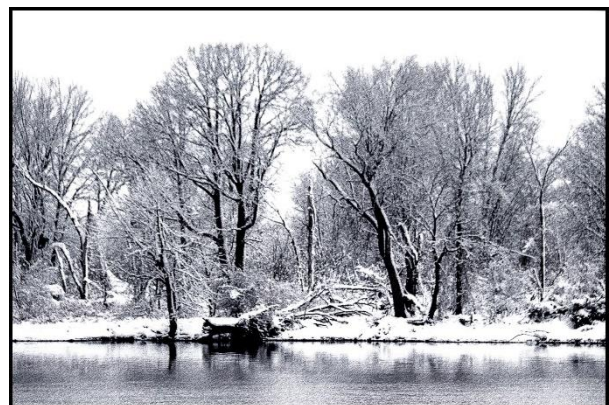
by Lynda Buske

Many photo editing programs allow you to apply certain creative filters to your photo during post processing. Sometimes these types of filters are called digital painting. If you find your current photo editing program limited in this respect, there are multiple free apps that can be downloaded (e.g. Fotosketcher at <https://fotosketcher.com/>). The Nik Collection from Google is a bundle of free photo filter software which includes: Analog Efex Pro 2, Color Efex Pro 4, HDR Efex Pro 2, Silver Effex Pro 2. Each of these software programs target a slightly different aspect of photography. For example, Silver Effex is used for black and white images.

Here are some examples of the artistic effects you can create. I modified the original image below in Fotosketcher by applying a water colour effect and there are plenty of controls you can adjust to get the desired effect. It can definitely take a few minutes for the program to apply the filter to a full resolution photo. If you want to then adjust the brush size or strength of the effect, it takes another few minutes to recreate. I lose patience. Instead, I first play with a reduced photo (1500 pixel width) which usually processes in about 10 seconds, depending on the filter. Once I get the desired look, I bring in the full resolution photo and go get a cup of tea!



You may actually be able to use a filter to rescue a slightly out-of-focus image. See below where a pencil filter sharpened the soft edges of the original.



Once you get comfortable, you can use a filtered photo for a background and layer another one on top. I used two photos for the one below, applying a brush-filter in Photoscape X on the first image of sunflowers in a field before using it as a background.

