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Photoshop Elements >
Clone Stamp Tool Problem
(Healing Brush, Too)

David Morel discovered an anomaly when using the Clone Stamp tool.

Surprisingly, hardly anyone else has noticed the problem (including this writer).

The problem is also present when using the Healing Brush tool.

Long Story Short

When cloning, the Levels adjustment layer may have a twofold affect on the tone of the cloning.

This occurs when Sample All Layers is selected in options bar/Tool Options.

If Sample All Layers is selected, deselect the eye icon for the Levels adjustment layer before cloning.

Long Story

1 - What's Sample All Layers?

Sample All Layers is selected when parts of the photograph are scattered on several layers, such as a collage.

You also select Sample All Layers when cloning on a blank layer.

The Clone Stamp tool will sample all of the parts of the photograph.

2 - Example

Let's say you're making a collage for your daughter/granddaughter/niece.

She's in the princess stage.

Note the Levels adjustment layer on the top of the layers stack.

Levels adjustment layer
Clouds
Unicorn #1
Unicorn #2
Princess
Blue sky (Background copy)
Blue sky (Background)

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Note the Clouds layer.

Levels adjustment layer
Clouds
Unicorn #1
Unicorn #2
Princess
Blue sky (Background copy)
Blue sky (Background)

You want to clone some of the clouds.

You add a blank layer (layer 1).

Levels adjustment layer
Layer 1 (Blank layer)
Clouds
Unicorn #1
Unicorn #2
Princess
Blue sky (Background copy)
Blue sky (Background)

You clone the clouds on the blank layer.

Levels adjustment layer
Layer 1 (Blank layer)
Clouds
Unicorn #1
Unicorn #2
Princess
Blue sky (Background copy)
Blue sky (Background)

The cloned clouds will look too bright.

That's because they're getting a double dose of the Levels adjustment layer.

3 - Double Dose?

Dose #1

The clouds on the Clouds layer are getting a dose of Levels.

Dose #2

You sample these clouds.

Remember, they've received a dose of Levels.

When you clone the clouds on the blank layer, the Levels adjustment layer affects the cloned clouds **again**.

4 - Solutions

There are two solutions.

Do **one** of the following.

Solution #1

As mentioned, deselect the eye icon for the Levels adjustment layer before cloning.

Solution #2

When you create a blank layer for cloning, make sure it's above the Levels adjustment layer.

Layer 1 (Blank layer)
Levels adjustment layer
Clouds
Unicorn #1
Unicorn #2
Princess
Blue sky (Background copy)
Blue sky (Background)

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