

Stacking Images in Photoshop

Take a series of images from the same viewpoint preferably with a tripod but can be handheld depending on the view and how steady you are. Keep all camera settings identical for each image (including focus, ISO, shutter speed and aperture). To remove objects use 10-20 images. To smooth out movement up to 50 or more images may be needed depending on the effect you want to achieve.

Lightroom:

1. Loading all these images into Lightroom and check them for quality. Generally raw images should give the best result.
2. In Lightroom, select all the images then choose: **Photo | Edit In | Open as Layers in Photoshop**. The image will be loaded into Photoshop as Layers.

Photoshop:

3. If you took the images handheld, select all the layers and choose: **Edit | Auto-Align Layers**. This may take a while. If the images were taken on a tripod this should not be necessary.
4. Select all the layers and choose: **Layer | Smart Objects | Convert to Smart Object**. This will collapse the layers into a stack. Again it will take a while.
5. Then choose: **Layer | Smart Objects | Stack Mode | Median**. For each pixel position in the image, this calculates the median (50%) value. In general this will exclude any pixel values derived from moving objects because they are only present in a small portion of the images in the stack and will occur at the extreme ends of the distribution. Having a fast computer will also help here.
6. Before saving the resultant image you should get rid of all the stacked images with **Layer | Flatten Image** otherwise your saved psd file will be monstrous.
7. If you took the images handheld you may also need to crop the image with the Rectangular Marquee tool to remove the edge aberrations.
8. Save the image with **File | Save** and it will reappear in Lightroom where it can be edited to satisfaction.