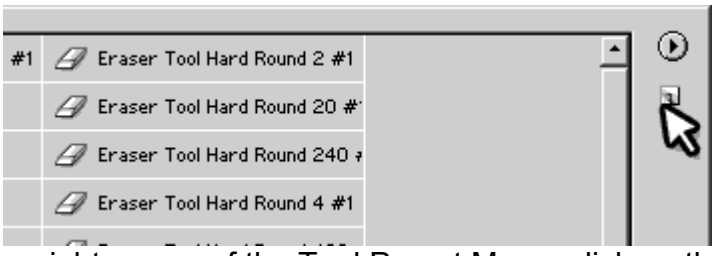
Creating Tool Presets and Actions in PhotoShop 7

This is a basic tutorial on how you can define any specific tool in Photoshop and assign a shortcut to that tool with Photoshop Actions. We use this method to create a shortcut key for our X-keys Professional Keyboard for Photoshop to open the Type tool with a 36 pixel Arial Font. You can use these same steps to create Tool Presets and Keyboard Shortcuts for most of the tools in Photoshop. For more information, please visit www.xkeys.com.

Step 1 - Create a new Tool Preset

1. Select a tool and adjust the settings. For our example, we select the Type Tool, set the Font to Arial, Regular, 36px.

2. In the upper left corner of the Photoshop workspace, click on the "Tool Preset Picker" button to open the Tool Preset Menu.



3. In the upper right corner of the Tool Preset Menu, click on the arrow button to open the "Create New Tool Preset" Icon (the square icon under the round arrow button).

4. The "New Tool Preset" window will open displaying the description of the tool you have selected. You may accept Photoshop's description or rename it. For our example, we renamed it "Arial 36px".

5. Click "OK" to create the Tool Preset

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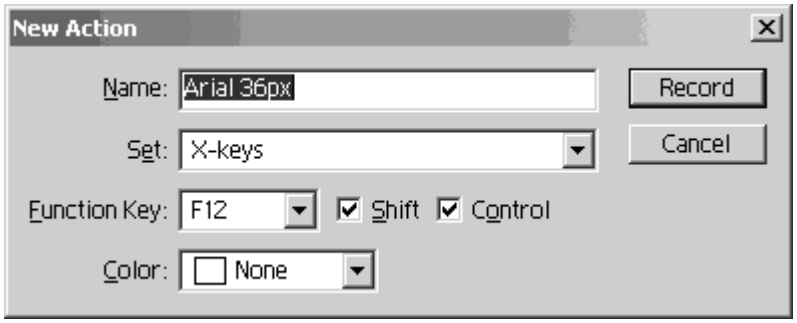
Step 2 - Link an Action to your Tool Preset

1. Select the "Actions" Tab in Photoshop's History Palette.

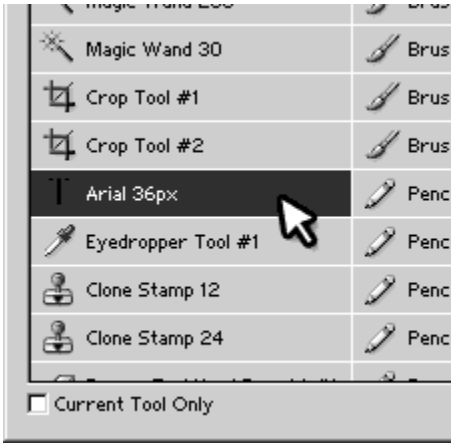
2. Click on the "Create New Set" Icon on the bottom of the palette, name the new set "X-keys", and click the OK button to create the new set.

3. Click on the "Create New Action" Icon on the bottom of the palette, the "New Action" window will open.

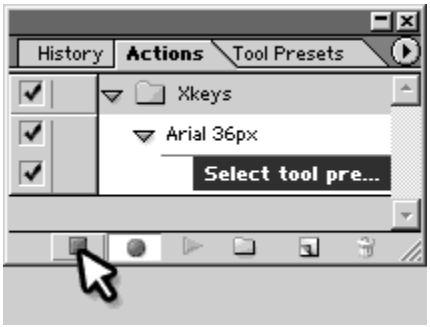


4. Name the new action to match the tool preset you created in step 1, select a Function Key and Modifiers to trigger this action. Using both the Shift and Ctrl modifiers will help prevent you from overwriting an existing Photoshop keyboard shortcut. For our example, we use "Arial 36px" and "F12+Shift+Ctrl" which matches the combination pre-programmed on our X-keys.

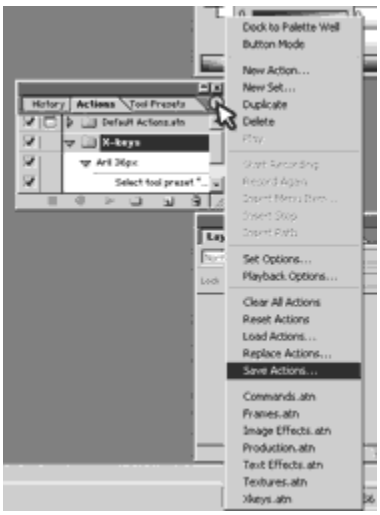
5. Click the "Record" button.



6. Click the "Tool Preset Picker" Icon and select the preset we created in step 1



7. Click the "Stop" Icon on the bottom of the Actions Palette.



8. Click on the X-keys Folder in the Actions Palette, Click on the button in the upper right corner of the Actions Palette to open the Actions menu, and select "Save Actions." (Photoshop should save your new set of actions upon exit anyway, but. . . FYI, To view a list of your actions and their associated keyboard shortcuts, open the Actions Menu again and select "Button Mode").

You may follow these same steps to create tool presets, link them to keyboard shortcuts, and program those shortcuts into any key on your X-keys.

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