

Plug-ins: Supercharge Your Zoner Photo Studio

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Intended for: [pros](#)

[Zoner Photo Studio](#) offers many tools for editing pictures, but sometimes you need a tool it doesn't have. That's where **plug-ins** shine. Plug-ins are modules that expand the program's abilities to include more ways to edit pictures. Let's take a look at how to work with plug-ins.



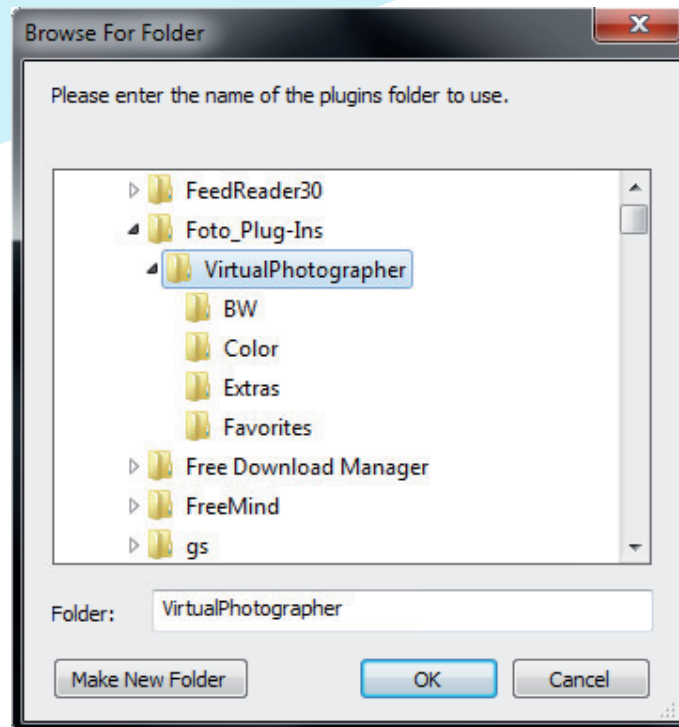
"Plug-in modules," or "plug-ins," is a term for software that cannot function on its own, but instead plugs into other software to expand that software's abilities. Most plug-ins cover one purpose or set of related purposes. Some can convert RAW files from various camera makers; others compose panoramas; yet others can for example turn photographs into imitation pencil drawings.

The plug-ins that Zoner Photo Studio can use are those originally created for Adobe Photoshop and for that program's "home" version, Adobe Photoshop Elements. Zoner Photo Studio cannot work with every one of these plug-ins ever produced, but it can still use many of them. More than a few of these plug-ins can be downloaded for free from the Internet.

Installing a Plug-in

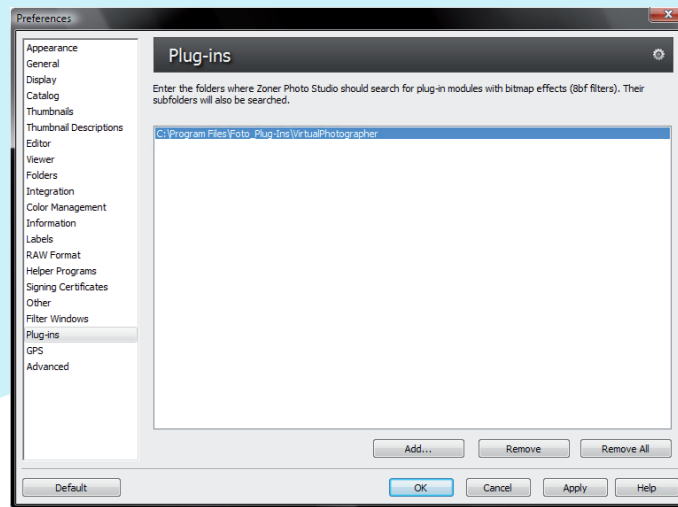
Only the Professional Edition of Zoner Photo Studio supports work with plug-ins. The Home Edition does not. Also, the program only supports work with plug-ins that have the ".8bf" extension. Some .8bf plug-ins also cannot cooperate with Zoner Photo Studio correctly or at all, so test out each plug-in right after finding it. That way you can immediately seek a replacement if it is not working.

Most plug-ins are offered for download as compressed .zip files or as .exe installer files. To install a .zip plug-in, extract its contents to a folder of your choice. [Zoner Photo Studio](#) offers a Plugins folder within its branch of Program Files, but you may also place plug-ins anywhere else. This does not affect their functioning in Zoner Photo Studio at all, but other folders may be more convenient for accessing the plug-ins from other software. If the plug-in offers an installer, use it like any other program installer. It will typically create a folder for the plug-in under Program Files.



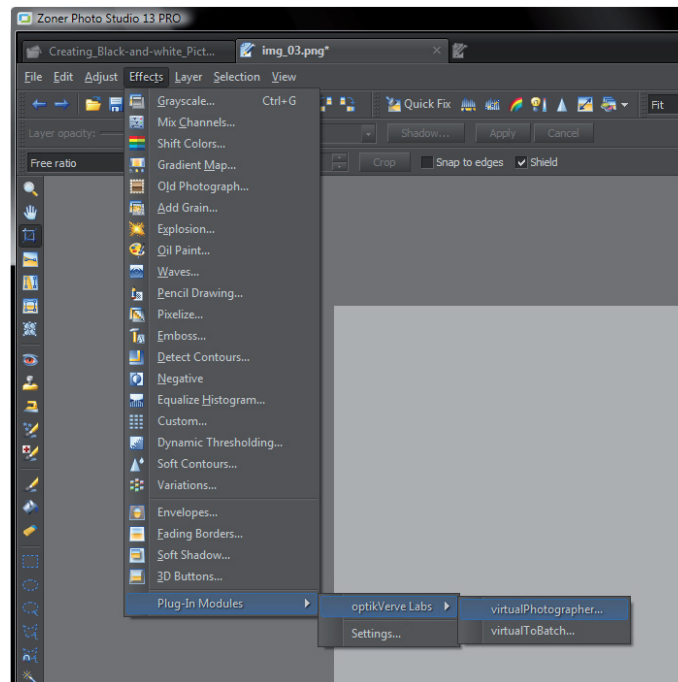
Choose any location you want for the plug-in folders.
Putting all such folders in a single place may be the most convenient for navigation.

There are two ways to point Zoner Photo Studio to the folder containing plug-in modules. In the Manager or Editor, use **Settings | Preferences...** (Ctrl+M) and then the Plug-ins group, or, in the Editor only, use **Effects | Plug-in Modules | Settings....** Both techniques display the same window. Use the **Add...** button in that window to set the folder or folders where your copy of Zoner Photo Studio seeks plug-ins.



The window for setting the path to plug-ins is in the program settings.

The plug-in only becomes available after you restart [Zoner Photo Studio](http://www.zoner.com). Open the picture that you want to edit, and then use **Effects | Plug-in Modules** to select the plug-in that you want to use.



After you set the path to the plug-in and restart the program, you can begin using that plug-in.

After you choose a plug-in for your work, a separate window appears, showing controls and a preview of the picture. Then it's up to you to "play with" the controls to get the effect you want.

Illustrated here is the plug-in VirtualPhotographer from OptikVerve Labs, which offers a wide range of color and black-and-white editing filters—a total of about 200. It is simple to use and gives great results. But this is only one out of the hundreds of plug-ins out there. We are sure that you will find one or more of them a very useful supplement for your work in [Zoner Photo Studio](#).



Fine-tuning the curve's midpoints can add some depth to the picture.



Plugins can do a wide variety of things.