# Serious Fun with the Morphing Mesh

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Intended for: advanced

Like other programs' similar tools, the Morphing Mesh in Zoner Photo Studio is good for making runway models' impossible figures even more impossible, as you may know. You probably aren't working with such pictures, but the Morphing Mesh can still come in handy for you as well. Let's take a look at improving a smile on a photograph using this tool.
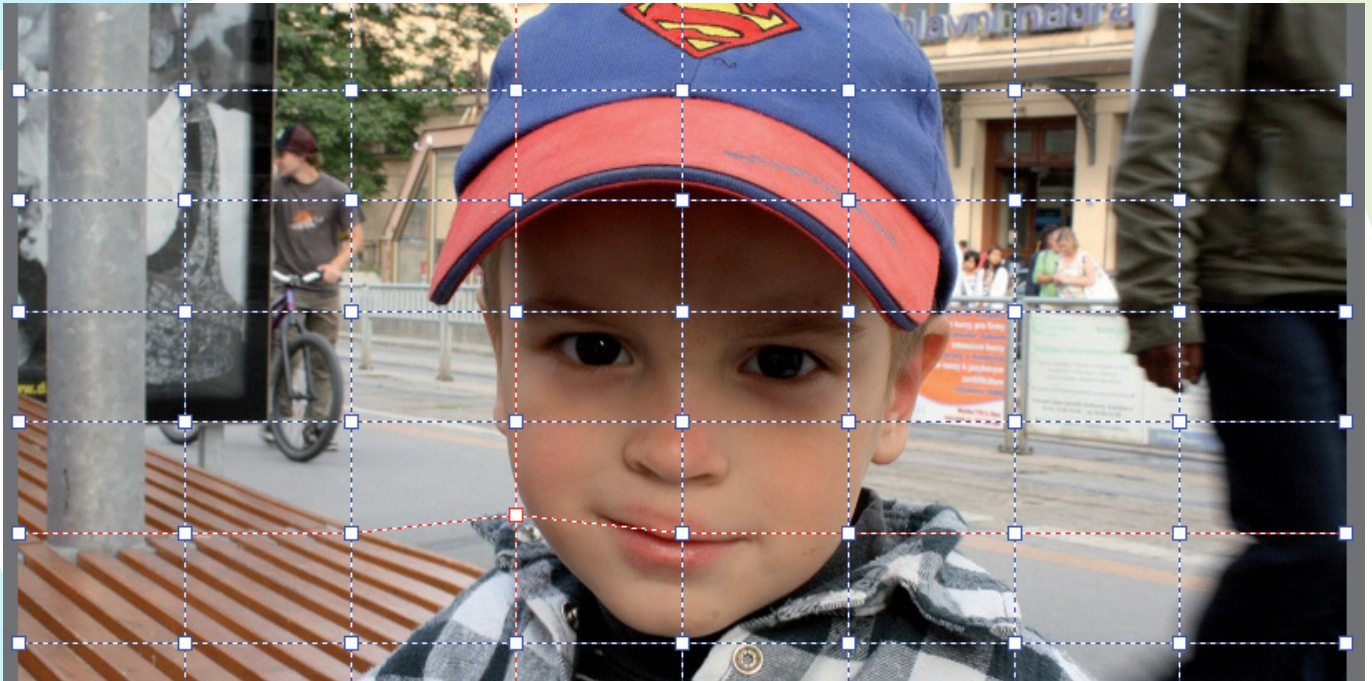
Details count, and sometimes the only detail missing from a picture is the quality of the subject's smile. In that case, you can use the Morphing Mesh in Zoner Photo Studio to add it in. You can also use the Mesh to change someone's expression or figure in minutes, for a caricature or other funny photograph.

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Morphing with the Mesh

For both of these goals, the Morphing Mesh is the tool to use. Find it on the Editor's Main tool-bar, the one along the left. Its button shows a picture of a grid. To turn on the Mesh with a keyboard shortcut, press X. The Morphing Mesh makes the picture beneath it "liquid," and moving the points of the mesh grid distorts the picture beneath it. The Options toolbar for the Morphing Mesh lets you give it any number of rows and columns manually, or up to 15 rows and columns automatically. To create rows and columns automatically, click **Create Mesh...** and set the row and column counts. To create them manually, click the picture in a place where there is not yet already a node.
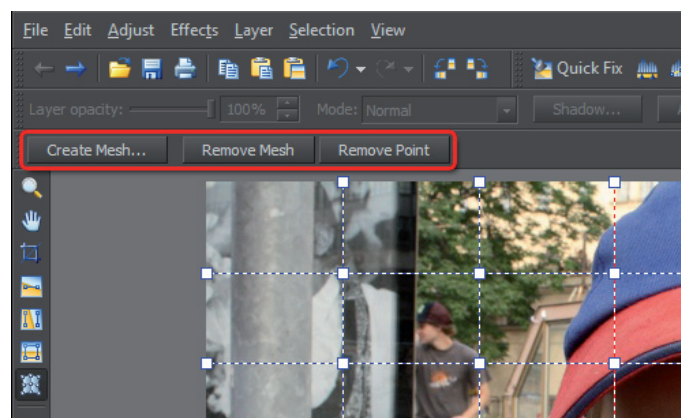
Use the three buttons on the Options toolbar to help set up the Mesh.

Note that the steps below for using the Morphing Mesh to raise the corners of a mouth to add a smile to a picture are only doable in certain cases, and they are also hard work. The function is more typically used for minor corrections to facial expressions.
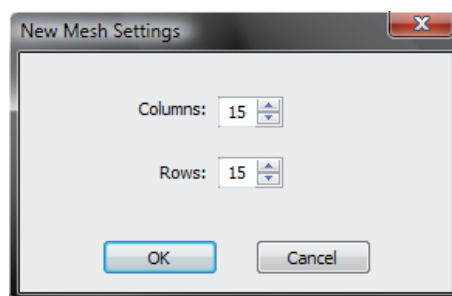
Using a window to create mesh rows and columns. The maximum here is 15.

There are other ways than the Morphing Mesh to "play with" the shape of someone's face. However, working with the Mesh gives you a feel for how the picture reacts to deformation and for how to shape a smile onto the given face. To get into the swing of work with this tool, try creating just a few nodes in a region around the area of interest (eyes, mouth, etc.), shifting them, and seeing how that affects the look of the picture. Click and drag outwards from the center of the region to stretch it outwards. Click and drag inwards towards the center of the region to shrink it inwards.

However, the picture does not distort just in the area right around the nodes, but also in the remaining parts of the picture as well. In a case like this, the simplest solution is to add another node to the mesh and reposition it to correct the unwanted deformation.

Hacking a Smile

In the two illustrations below you can see the birth of a hint of a smile. A six-row, six-column mesh has been laid over the original picture. Two additional nodes were then added around the corners of the mouth. Dragging them slightly upwards has created the slight smile. Incidentally, to remove a node—either one of the originals or one you have added—click it (this turns it red) and press the Delete key.

This type of work suffices for small changes, but not for putting a big cheek-to-cheek grin on a person. The choice of nodes to shift should be made carefully and wisely, to make sure the face still looks natural after the work is done. Effective use of this tool takes a good dose of creativity and patience. So do not forget to do all your experiments and edits on copies of pictures instead of the originals. But above all, don't forget to have fun... though that shouldn't be too difficult!

A hint of a smile. Shift the nodes too much, and the face becomes noticeably deformed.