

Digital Photo Image Editing

- using Adobe® Photoshop Elements

Workshop 9: ADJUST LIGHT LEVELS and HUE/SATURATION

Part 1

Objective

The objective of this exercise is to learn basic techniques for adjusting lighting and color in your images in a way that permits you to make your own choices about how much adjustment to apply. We will focus on the Levels and Hue/Saturation dialog boxes that are opened via the Enhance menu.

Exercise 09-01

Image: *GreekChurch.jpg*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 09** folder and select the file *GreekChurch.jpg*
- Select **Full Edit** to open the file in the editor.
- In the editor, be sure that the **Layers and Undo History Palettes** are visible in the palette bin. If not already open, they can be opened by selecting them under the **Window** menu.
- In the **Layers Palette** duplicate the **Background** by selecting **Duplicate Layer** either from the Layer drop down menu or from the Layers Palette flyout menu or use the **Control J** shortcut.
- With the **Background Copy** layer selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Levels**
- In the **Levels dialog box**, use sliders under the **Input Levels** histogram (graph) to adjust the dark, light, and midtones in the image. Drag the white slider under the right end to the left to brighten the image. Drag the gray (middle) slider right or left to adjust midtones. Because the original image is quite dark it is not necessary to darken the dark tones so leave the black (left) slider where it is. Check and uncheck the **preview box** to see the effect of your choices on the image. Select **Reset** if you want to start over. When satisfied with your adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box. (We will not be using Output Levels in this course.)
- With the **Background Copy** layer still selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation** to open the dialog box.
- In the drop down menu under **Master**, select individual colors for adjustment. For each color in the list drag the saturation slider to the right to intensify a color or to the left to desaturate a color (that is to make it more muted) or leave the slider at zero for colors that do not need adjusting. This image may benefit from boosting saturation in reds and yellows.
- For each color drag the **hue slider** slightly to the right or the left if colors need to be made warmer (adjusted toward the reds) or cooler (adjusted toward the blues).
- Adjusting lightness in the Hue/Saturation dialog box is not recommended because this tends to make colors grayer. The dialog box does not have a Reset button but if you hold down the **Alt key**, the **Cancel button** will temporarily change to a **Reset button**. When satisfied with your color adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- In the **Layers palette**, turn the visibility of the **Background Copy** layer on and off by clicking on the **eyeball icon** to compare the adjusted image with the original image. The Levels and Hue/Saturation adjustments were applied only to the active layer.
- Step forward and backward in the **Undo History Palette** to review the adjustments you made.
- Close the file when you are finished.

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Exercise 09-02

Image: *YoungBoy.psd*

- The picture of the young boy looks pretty good to start with but the bright green background competes for your attention with the subject. This picture may benefit from shifting the background colors to be more harmonious with the colors that appear in the subject.
- Open the **Lab Images Week 9** and select the file *YoungBoy.psd*
- Select **Full Edit** to open the file in the editor
- In the editor, be sure that the **Layers** and **Undo History** Palettes are visible in the palette bin. If not already open they can be opened by selecting them under the Window menu.
- In the **Layers Palette** duplicate the **Background** by selecting **Duplicate Layer** either from the Layers drop down menu or from the Layers Palette flyout menu or use the **Control J** shortcut.
- Go to **Select > Load Selection...**
- When the **Load Selection** dialog box opens, be sure that 'background' appears as the selection. Below that line, the **Invert box** should be unchecked. Under **Operation** the radio button for **New Selection** should be on. Then click on **OK** to close the dialog box.
- With the **Background Copy** layer selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation** to open the dialog box.
- In the dialog box with **Edit: Master** showing, drag the **hue slider** to the left to change the appearance of the background color. This image may benefit from shifting the background colors into the range of yellow and orange. (Somewhere around -40 more or less)
- If you want to **reset** the Hue/Saturation dialog box, press the **Alt key** on your keyboard to temporarily change the **Cancel button** into a **Reset button**. (This tip works in many dialog boxes.) When satisfied with your color adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- With the background selected, Go to **Select > Invert** to select everything but the background.
- Go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Levels** to adjust lighting for the subject if you want. (If you prefer the original lighting then leave it alone.) Click on **OK** when you are satisfied.
- Go to **Select > Deselect** or type **Control D** on your keyboard to turn off the marching ants.
- In the **Layers palette**, turn the visibility of the **Background Copy** layer on and off by clicking on the eyeball icon to compare the adjusted image with the original image.
- Step forward and backward in the **Undo History Palette** to review the adjustments you made.
- The usual order for adjustments is to first adjust lighting and then adjust color because adjustments to lighting can shift colors. In this example, the background and subject are adjusted in different ways. Because a selection was made, any lighting adjustment to the subject would have no effect on the color adjustments already made to the background.
- Close the file when you are finished.

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Exercise 09-03

Image: *CastleRuins.jpg*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 09** folder and select the image *CastleRuins.jpg*
- Select **Full Edit** to open the file in the editor.
- In the editor, be sure that the **Layers Palette and Undo History Palette** are visible in the palette bin. If not already open they can be opened by selecting them under the **Window** menu.
- In the tool bin select the **Straighten** tool. At the left end of the tool options bar choose **Reset Tool**. In the **Canvas Options** drop down list select **Crop to Remove Background**.
- **Click and drag** along a line in the image that you want to appear horizontal (for example, along the base of the wall.) You may want to **crop** the image before **adjusting lighting and colors**. Be sure to **reset** the tool before selecting the crop.
- In the **Layers Palette** duplicate the **Background** by selecting **Duplicate Layer** either from the **Layers** drop down menu or from the **Layers Palette** flyout menu or use the **Control J** shortcut.
- With the **Background Copy** layer selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Levels**
- In the **Levels dialog box**, use the sliders under the **Input Levels** histogram (graph) to adjust the dark, light, and midtones in the image. Drag the **black slider** under the left end to the right to a point just beyond that where the histogram rises like a hill. This will improve contrast by darkening the dark tones in the image. Drag the **gray (middle) slider** to the right to adjust midtones. Because the original image is fairly bright it is not necessary to adjust the light tones so leave the **white (right) slider** where it is. Check and uncheck the **preview box** to see the effect of your choices on the image. Select **Reset** if you want to start over. When satisfied with your adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- With the **Background Copy** layer still selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation** to open the dialog box.
- In the drop down menu under **Master**, select individual colors for adjustment. For each color in the list drag the saturation slider to the right to intensify a color or to the left to desaturate a color (that is to make it more muted) or leave the slider at zero for colors that do not need adjusting. This image may benefit from boosting saturation in reds, yellows, blues, and cyans.
- For each color drag the **hue slider** slightly to the right or the left if colors need to be made warmer (more reddish) or cooler (more bluish). This image may benefit from tweaking the blues and cyans slightly toward the red. (Drag the hue slider slightly to the right.)
- Adjusting lightness in the **Hue/Saturation** dialog box is not recommended because this tends to make colors gray. (There are times when you do want a color to be darker and more gray.)
- When satisfied with your color adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- In the **Layers palette**, turn the visibility of the Background Copy layer on and off by clicking on the **eyeball icon** to compare the adjusted image with the original image.
- Close the file when you are finished.

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Exercise 09-04 Optional

Image: *MountainTerraces.jpg*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 09** folder; select the image *MountainTerraces.jpg*
- Select **Full Edit** to open the file in the editor
- In the editor, be sure that the **Layers and Undo History Palettes** are visible in the palette bin.
- In the **Layers Palette** duplicate the **Background** by selecting **Duplicate Layer** either from the Layer drop down menu or from the Layers Palette flyout menu or use the **Control J** shortcut.
- With the **Background Copy** layer selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Levels**
- When the **Levels** dialog box opens select **Auto** in the right side of the box. Then drag the gray (middle) slider right or left to adjust midtones if desired. Check and uncheck the **preview box** to see the effect of your choices on the image. Select **Reset** if you want to start over. When satisfied with your adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- With the **Background Copy** layer still selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation** to open the dialog box.
- In the drop down menu under **Master**, select individual colors for adjustment. For each color drag the saturation slider to the right to intensify a color or to the left to desaturate a color or leave the slider at zero for colors that do not need adjusting. This image may benefit from boosting saturation in the yellows (to about +12 or so).
- For each color drag the **hue slider** slightly to the right or the left if colors need to be made warmer (more reddish) or cooler (more bluish). This image may benefit from tweaking the yellows (to around -3) and shifting the cyans (to about +30).
- When satisfied with your color adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- Step forward and backward in the **Undo History Palette** to review the adjustments you made.
- Close the file when you are finished.

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Exercise 09-05 Optional

Image: *Bird_of_Paradise.jpg*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 09** folder; select the image *Bird_of_Paradise.jpg*
- Select **Full Edit** to open the file in the editor.
- In the **Editor**, be sure that the **Layers Palette** is visible in the palette bin.
- If desired, **crop** out excess foliage at the left of the image. **Reset** the crop tool before using.
- In the **Layers Palette** duplicate the **Background** by selecting **Duplicate Layer** either from the Layers drop down menu or from the Layers Palette flyout menu or use the **Control J** shortcut.
- With the **Background Copy** layer selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Levels** to adjust the tonality in this image. Select **OK** when you are satisfied.
- Go to **Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation**. Select colors for adjustment from the list under **Master**. Check each color to see if they would benefit from boosting saturation or from tweaking the hue. Select **OK** when you are satisfied.
- Toggle layer visibilities to compare the image before and after adjustments were made.