

Digital Photo Image Editing

- using Adobe® Photoshop Elements

Workshop 10: ADJUST LIGHT LEVELS and HUE/SATURATION

Part 2

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 adjustments that can later be changed. We will focus on using adjustment layers for Levels and Hue/Saturation. We will also practice with the Highlights/Shadows adjustment.

Exercise 10-01

Image: *GrandCanyon.jpg*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 10** and select the file ***GrandCanyon.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.
- To create an adjustment layer, either go to **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Levels** or click on the **adjustment layer icon** (it looks like a circle that is half black and half white) in the **Layers Palette** and select Levels from the drop down menu. If you create the adjustment layer from the Layer menu, you can give it the name of your choice or accept the default name. Click **OK** to open the Levels dialog box. If you created the adjustment layer with the **Layers Palette icon**, the Levels dialog box opens right away.
- Notice that a **new layer** has been created in the **Layers Palette**.
- With the **Levels dialog box** open, 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 darken the dark tones. Drag the gray (middle) slider right or left to adjust midtones. You will probably drag the gray slider to the left to lighten the midtones. Because the original image has bright areas it is not necessary to adjust the light tones so leave the white (right end) 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.
- Create another adjustment layer. Either go to **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Hue/Saturation** or click on the **adjustment layer icon** in the Layers Palette and select **Hue/Saturation** from the drop down menu. If you create the adjustment layer from the Layer menu, you can give it the name of your choice or accept the default name. Click **OK** to open the Hue/Saturation dialog box. If you created the adjustment layer with the Layers Palette icon, the Hue/Saturation dialog box opens right away.
- Notice that a **new layer** has been created in the Layers Palette.
- 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 (more reddish) or cooler (more bluish).

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Exercise 10-01 (continued)

Image: *GrandCanyon.jpg*

- 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 darker and more gray.)
- The **Hue/Saturation dialog box** does not have a Reset button; however, if you press the **Alt key** on your keyboard, the **Cancel button** temporarily becomes a **Reset button**.
- 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. Be sure to leave your last adjustment selected before moving on.
- Double click the **Levels icon** at the left side of the levels adjustment layer in the **Layers Palette** (the icon looks like a graph). This reopens the **Levels dialog box**. Notice that the settings you selected earlier are still there. Adjust these setting further if you want to modify the distribution of tones in the image. Click **OK** when you are finished.
- Double click the **Hue/Saturation icon** at the left side of the Hue/Saturation adjustment layer in the **Layers Palette** (this icon also looks like a graph). This reopens the **Hue/Saturation dialog box**. Notice that the settings you selected earlier are still there. Adjust these settings further if you want to modify the colors within the image. Click **OK** when you are finished.
- Step forward and backward in the **Undo History Palette** to review the adjustments you made.
- Close the image when you are finished.

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Exercise 10-02

Image: *LittleBoy.psd*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 10** and select the file *LittleBoy.psd*
- 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.
- This picture was taken in bright sunlight and would benefit from brightening the shadows.
- Create an **adjustment layer for Levels** as in previous exercises and adjust the tones to your liking. You will probably drag the gray slider to the left. Click on **OK** when you are finished. These levels adjustments only take us part of the way toward brightening the shadows.
- Now click on the **Background layer** in the **Layers Palette** to select it.
- 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** keyboard shortcut. Change the name Background Copy to Highlights/Shadows.
- In the **Layers Palette**, click on the **Highlights/Shadows layer** and drag the layer to the top of the list of layers so that it appears **above** the Levels adjustment layer. When you do this, the moved layer will hide the effect of the adjustment layer on the Background. We are doing this so that we can later compare the effect of a Levels adjustment with an alternative approach.
- With the **Highlights/Shadows layer** both visible and selected, go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Shadows/Highlights**. Notice that this choice is not available as an adjustment layer. It is a destructive change and so we **duplicated the background** to carry this out. The original distribution of tones will be maintained in the Background in the Layers Palette.
- With the **Shadows/Highlights dialog box** open, use the sliders to adjust the dark, light, and midtones in the image. Check and uncheck the **preview box** to see the effect of your choices on the image. Notice that there is no Reset button; if you want to start over, hold down the **Alt key** on your keyboard and notice that the Cancel button temporarily becomes a Reset button. When satisfied with your adjustments select **OK** to close the dialog box.
- In the **Layers Palette** click the **eyeball icons** for various layers to turn visibility on and off in order to check the effect of each layer and to compare the Highlights/Shadows adjustment with the Levels adjustment. You can reopen the Levels dialog box for further adjustment.
- Click the **eyeball** on the Shadows/Highlights layer to hide its visibility before proceeding.
- In the **Layers Palette** double click the **Levels icon** (it looks like a graph) at the left side of the levels adjustment layer in the palette. This reopens the Levels dialog box. Notice that the settings you selected earlier are still there. Adjust these setting further if you want to modify the distribution of tones in the image. Click **OK** when you are finished.
- Step forwards and backwards in the **Undo History Palette** to see the effect of each step.
- Close the file when you are finished.

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Exercise 10-03

Image: *AsianTemple.jpg*

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- Open the **Lab Images Week 10** and select the file *AsianTemple.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.
- Use the techniques of **Exercise 10-01** to create an **adjustment layer for Levels**.
- In the **Levels dialog box** use the **Input Levels sliders** to adjust tonality in the images. When you are satisfied with your adjustments click on **OK**.
- Use the techniques of **Exercise 10-01** to create an **adjustment layer for Hue/Saturation**.
- In the **Hue/Saturation dialog box** this image will probably benefit from a boost to saturation in the reds and yellows (about +20) and a lesser boost to saturation in the blues and cyans (about +10).
- Before closing the **Hue/Saturation dialog** you may want to tweak the hue of some colors. When you are satisfied with your adjustments click **OK** to close the dialog box.
- In the **Layers Palette** duplicate the **Background**. Leave the **Background Copy** between the Background and the Levels adjustment layer. With the **Background copy selected** go to **Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Shadows/Highlights** to bring out detail in the shadows. When satisfied with your adjustment click **OK** to close the box.
- If you want to further adjust levels or colors, double click the appropriate icon in the **Layers Palette** as you did in the previous exercises.
- Step forward and backward in the **Undo History Palette** to review the adjustments you made.
- Close the file when you are finished.

Exercise 10-04 Optional

Image: *MountainFarm.jpg*

- Open the **Lab Images Week 10** and select the file *MountainFarm.jpg*
- Select **Full Edit** to open the file in the editor
- Use the techniques of **Exercise 10-01** to adjust this image. In the **Hue/Saturation dialog**, this image will probably benefit from a boost to saturation in the yellows (about +25) and a hue shift in the yellows, greens, cyans, and blues. Click **OK** to accept the changes.
- Reopen either the levels dialog box or the hue/saturation dialog box to modify your adjustments.
- Step forward and backward in the **Undo History Palette** to review the adjustments you made.