Peninsula College Continuing Education – Digital Photography

Week 4 – Image adjustments and final output

■ Introduce and practice traditional image adjustments

We will need to access your photos through the web, your blog or some file storage to practice these adjustments. Please prepare for class. Some flash drives work in the lab.

Color Corrections, Enhancement, and Adjustments in Photoshop Elements (same concepts work in other programs)

Guided Edit – this walks you through the color correction task and you can learn from it.

Quick Fix – just the basic tools for correcting color and lighting.

Full Edit – most power and flexibility over your pixels for image correction. You can make adjustments directly to the image pixels or use adjustment layers that let you test out tweaks without affecting the image.

Using Quick Fix to learn

Smart Fix Adjusts lighting and color. Smart Fix corrects overall color balance and improves shadow and highlight detail, if necessary. The Smart Fix slider allows you to vary the amount of the adjustment. Click the Auto button to apply this command.

Red Eye Fix Automatically finds and fixes red eyes in the image.

Levels Adjusts the overall contrast of an image and may affect its color. If your image needs more contrast and it has a color cast, try this command, which works by individually mapping the lightest and darkest pixels in each color channel to black and white. Click the Auto button to apply this command,

Contrast Adjusts the overall contrast of an image without affecting its color. Use Auto Contrast when your image needs more contrast but the colors look right. Auto Contrast maps the lightest and darkest pixels in the image to white and black, which makes highlights appear lighter and shadows appear darker. Click the Auto button to apply this command.

Lighten Shadows Drag the slider to lighten the darkest areas of your photo without affecting the highlights. Pure black areas are not affected.

Darken Highlights Drag the slider to darken the lightest areas of your photo without affecting the shadows. Pure white areas are not affected.

Midtone Contrast Adjusts the contrast within the middle tonal values (those that are about half way between pure white and pure black) without affecting the extreme highlights and shadows.

Color Adjusts the contrast and color by identifying shadows, midtones, and highlights in the image rather than in individual color channels. It neutralizes the midtones and clips the white and black pixels using a default set of values. Click the Auto button to apply this command.

Saturation Makes colors more vivid or more muted.

Hue Shifts all colors in an image. This control is best used in small amounts or with selected objects whose color you want to change.

Temperature Makes colors warmer (red) or cooler (blue). Use this control to enhance sunsets or skin tones, or when the color balance set by your camera is off.

Tint Makes color more green or magenta. Use this control to fine-tune the colors after using the Temperature control.

Sharpen Sharpens your photo. Click Auto Sharpen to use the default amount of sharpening. Drag the slider to vary the amount of sharpening. Zoom your preview at 100% to get a more accurate view of the amount of sharpening you are applying.

Levels

Functionality for adjusting color and tone. With a Levels adjustment, you can set shadow and highlight values to use a full tonal range, adjust middle tones only, correct color casts, and so on.

Adjust color curves

The Adjust Color Curves command improves color tones in a photo by adjusting highlights, midtones, and shadows in each color channel. For example, this command can fix photos with silhouetted images resulting from strong backlighting, or slightly washed-out objects that were too close to the camera's flash.

In the Adjust Color Curves dialog box, you can compare and choose different tonal presets by selecting from the list of styles in the Select A Style box. To fine-tune the adjustment, adjust the highlights, midtone brightness and contrast, and shadows.

About adjustment and fill layers

Adjustment layers let you experiment with color and make tonal adjustments without permanently modifying the pixels in an image. You can think of an adjustment layer as a veil coloring the underlying layers. By default, an adjustment layer affects all layers below it, although you can change this behavior. When you create an adjustment layer, the Layers palette displays a white box representing the adjustment for that layer.

Correct color casts by comparing variations of an image

You can make color and tonal adjustments in the Color Variations dialog box by comparing and choosing different thumbnail variations of the photo. Color Variations works best for average tone images that don't require precise color adjustments.