

Basic Photoshop steps

Sharpness bad (view at 100% to discern) or lost highlights?

Shoot over if you need to. After reshooting several times you will learn how to get sharp, well-exposed images when you need them.

Adjust levels

Even if your image doesn't need it, try moving the upper sliders in *Image/Adjustments/Levels*. First move the outer sliders to the edges of the histogram 'mountain', then adjust the middle (*gamma*) slider until the image looks right. Go back to the outer sliders and adjust to look right. Experiment.

Too yellow?

This is a common problem since cameras do not adjust their white balance to tungsten light very well. Use *Image/Adjustments/Photo Filter*, set to *Cooling Filter (82)*, and slide *Density* to desired color.

Color not correct, image has area that should be neutrally colored (grey)?

Go to *Image/Adjustments/Levels*, then click on an area that should be neutral with the middle eyedropper tool. You may have to do this several times since this sampler reads a very small area which may be off-color.

Color not correct?

Use either *Image/Adjustments/Variations* or *Image/Adjustments/Color Balance* to correct. Sometimes this takes a lot of experimentation. For most situations correct the midtones.

One color not correct, others correct?

Go to *Image/Adjustments/Hue-Saturation*. Pick the color that needs to be corrected from the drop-down menu, then with the left eye-dropper tool sample (click on) the color you would like to change. Adjust sliders as needed. You can also precisely control which colors are changed by sliding the little triangles at the bottom of the box. The outer sliders control the color cut-off, the inner sliders control when the color starts to not be influenced (drop-off). If this changes the color in parts of the image you do not want the color changed, then cancel the dialogue box and select the area you want to be changed (with a selection tool) and try again.

Areas too light or too dark?

Use the burning and dodging tools. Generally you should use a very large and very soft (hardness = 0%) brush at a low (<20 exposure) and perform multiple times. Set options to midtones, but if you would like to increase or decrease the contrast of an area while burning or dodging experiment with the shadows and midtones options. Read the help menu to find out more about how this works.

Adjust levels again

Often the other adjustments will necessitate another visit to levels.

Sharpen image at 100%

If you are going to print the image it can be a little over-sharpened. For intermediate sharpening, use the *Filter/Sharpness/Unsharp mask* filter. Keep the threshold at 0, try a radius of 1 pixel at 50%. Move these top two sliders as needed. This is usually a better filter to use than the *Sharpen Filter* in any situation, so you might want to get used to it. Also, sometimes several small passes will be better than one large pass at the filter. Read the help menu to find out more about how this works.