The Adobe® Photoshop® Lightroom Classic Book

Sample pages

Scott Kelby
The world's #1 best-selling Lightroom book author

New Riders
VOICES THAT MATTER™

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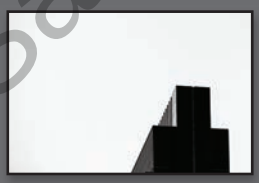

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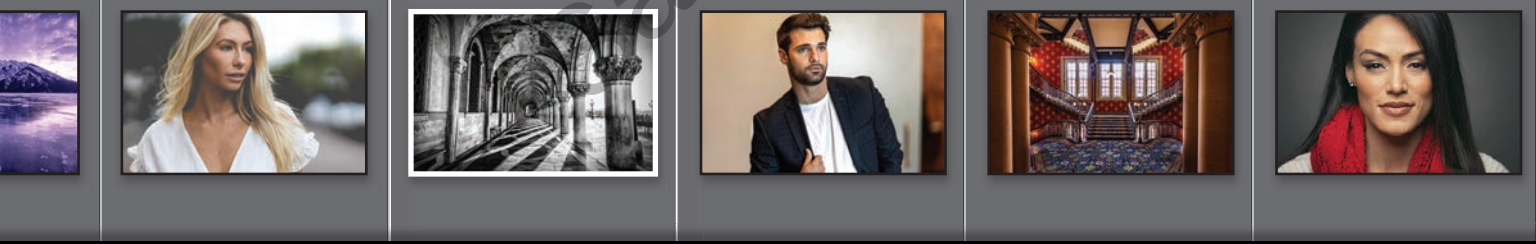

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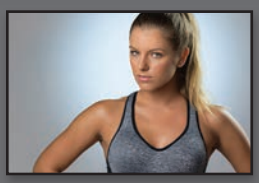

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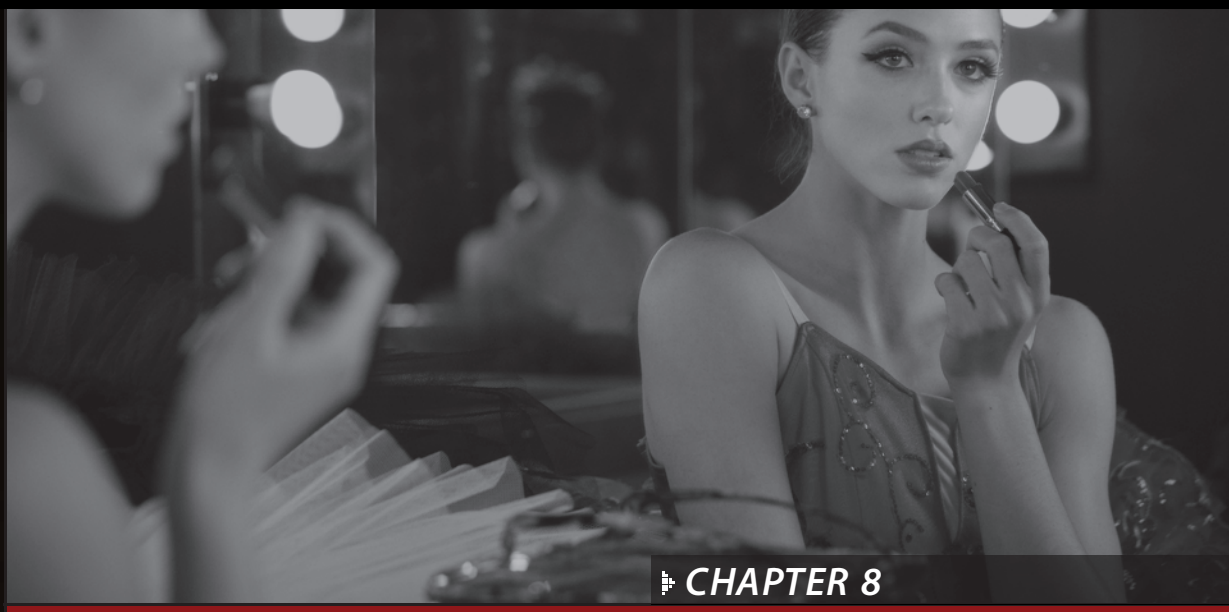


CHAPTER 8

SPECIAL EFFECTS

making your images look…well…special!

When you think of the phrase "special effects," what's the first thing that pops into your mind? Hollywood movies, right? No? That's not what popped into your head? Well, that's odd. May I ask, and I'm trying not to sound judgemental here, what did pop into your head when I said "special effects?" It's okay, you can share—this is a safe space and you're among friends. A chili dog? Seriously? That's what popped into your head when I said "special effects?" Really? Okay, now I am being judgemental because…come on…a chili dog? I just don't know what to say (and that totally took the wheels off my entire train of thought for this chapter opener). By the way, since you brought up chili dogs (and I consider myself somewhat of a chili dog connoisseur), did you know that on a "real," proper, honest-to-goodness chili dog, the chili on top does not have beans? That's right—if you go to a serious hot dog hut and ask for a chili dog, if the place is legit, there will be no beans in that chili. Also, I'll never forget a sign I saw at a famous hot dog stand in Indianapolis (I think it was Portillo's Hot Dogs), which read something to the effect of: "Once you're over 18, you don't put ketchup on your hot dog anymore." I knew right then that this place spoke to me. Okay, back to our special effects thing. I have to admit, your "chili dog" answer, when I set you up to answer "Hollywood," kind of threw me (I was not expecting that), so let's try another angle. Instead, can you tell me which movies you have seen? *Transformers*? Okay, this is great—now we're getting somewhere. Now, remember how in the movie those cars transformed into giant robots and battled the Decepticons, and they flew and they shot rockets? That was all Hollywood special effects. Wait, you don't recall there being any cars or robots? Okay, you beat me. I'm done. You win. You can skip this chapter.

Sample pages

Applying "Looks" Using Creative Profiles

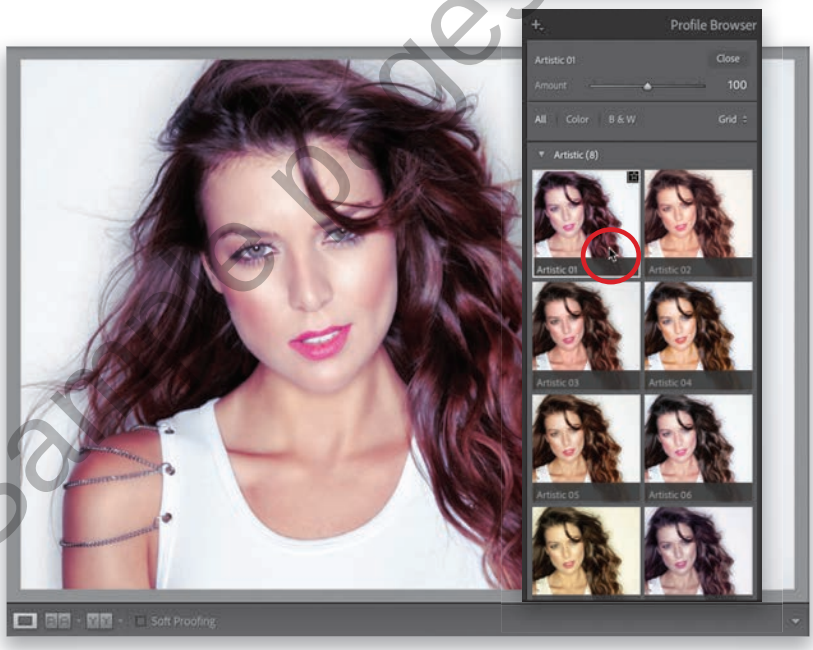
Back in Chapter 5, we looked at applying profiles to your RAW images. Well, besides those, there are a bunch of nice special effect "looks" you can apply with just one click, and they're not just limited to RAW photos—you can add them to JPEGs, TIFFs, whatever. Plus you can control the amount of the effect, as well. These creative profiles have a big advantage over standard presets because presets just move your Develop module sliders to a "pre-set" amount (like somebody processed the photo for you). However, creative profiles don't move your sliders—they're totally separate—so after you apply a creative profile, you can still edit your image any way you want.

Step One:

Here's our original image (remember, creative profiles don't need a RAW image—you can apply them to JPEGs, TIFFs, and PSDs, as well). In the Develop module, at the top of the Basic panel, to the far right of Profile, click on the button whose icon looks like four little rectangles (shown circled here in the inset) to bring up the Profile Browser (seen in the next step). You can also just choose **Browse** from the bottom of the Profile pop-up menu.

Step Two:

Clicking that icon brings up the **Profile Browser** with rows of thumbnails that show a preview of each look applied to your image, so you can quickly see what looks good without even having to click on one. You can also preview these profiles on your full-size image by just hovering your cursor over any thumbnail. There are four sets of creative profiles here: Artistic, B&W (which I cover in this chapter on page 231), Modern, and Vintage. To apply a profile, just click on one. Here, I clicked on the very first one in the Artistic set called "Artistic 01," and it adds a purple/reddish tone to the image and increases the contrast. If you don't like a profile you've clicked on, press **Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z)** to undo it or click on a different profile.



Sample pages

Step Three:

Let's try another set: Scroll down to the Modern profiles, and click on one you like (here, I chose Modern 05, which has kind of a nice desaturated look). Once you apply a creative profile, an **Amount slider** appears at the top of the browser so you can increase the intensity of the look or back it off if it's too much. Here, I lowered the Amount to 78 (the default is 100), so it's not quite so desaturated. (*Note:* The Amount slider only appears for Creative Profiles. RAW profiles don't have an Amount slider.) If there's a profile you really like, you can save it as a favorite and it will appear at the top of the browser (so you don't have to go digging for it). You do that by clicking on the **star icon** in the top-right corner of the profile you have selected (it doesn't appear until you move your cursor over or click on a particular profile).

Step Four:

Let's try one more. Scroll down to the B&W set and find one that looks good to you. Here, I went for a B&W profile (B&W 02) that adds a tone of highlights and contrast and her skin gets nearly blown out, so all her features stand out against it. It's not a traditional black-and-white look, but I dunno, maybe that's why I like it. (I pressed the **Y key** to get this side-by-side before and after.) When you're done choosing profiles, click the Close button at the top of the Profile Browser (you can see it in the previous step) to return to the Basic panel. If you apply a profile and later change your mind about it, just choose **Color** from the Profile pop-up menu to return to the default color profile.

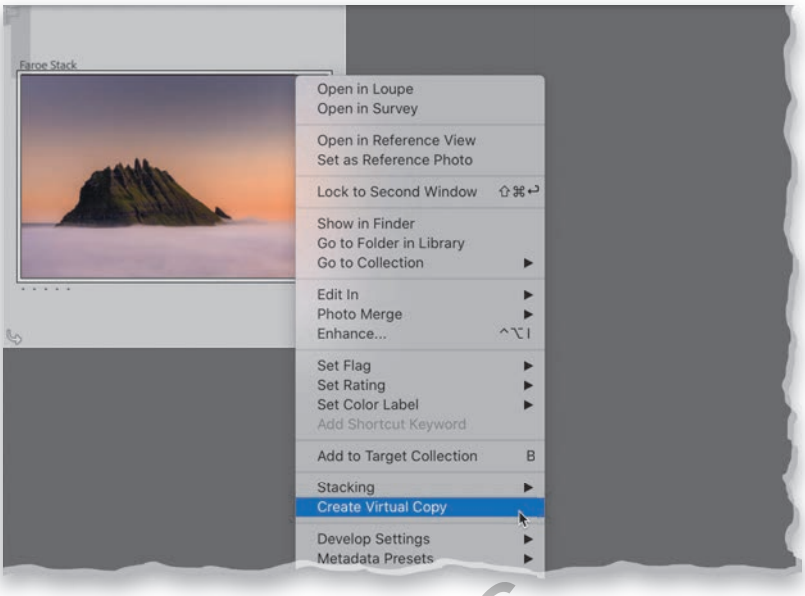
Sample pages

Virtual Copies—The "No Risk" Way to Experiment

Let's say you added a vignette to a bridal shot. Well, what if you wanted to see a version in black and white, and a version with a color tint, and a really contrasty version, and then maybe a version that was cropped differently? Well, what might keep you from doing that is having to duplicate a high-resolution file each time you wanted to try a different look, because it would eat up hard drive space and RAM like nobody's business. But luckily, you can create virtual copies, which don't take up space and allow you to try different looks without the overhead.

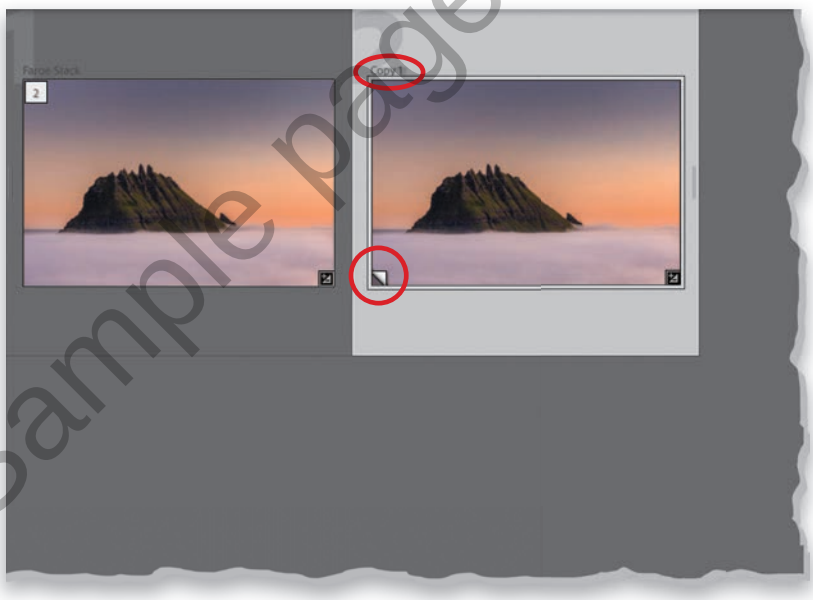
Step One:

You create a virtual copy by Right-clicking on the original photo and then choosing **Create Virtual Copy** from the pop-up menu (as shown here), or using the keyboard shortcut **Command-'** (apostrophe; **PC: Ctrl-'**). These virtual copies look and act the same as your original photo, and you can edit them just as you would your original, but here's the difference: it's not a real file, it's just another thumbnail with a set of instructions, so it doesn't add any real file size. That way, you can have as many of these virtual copies as you want, and experiment to your heart's content without filling up your hard disk. So, let's go ahead and create a virtual copy.



Step Two:

Once you create a virtual copy, you'll know which version is the copy because (a) virtual copies have a curled page icon in the lower-left corner of the image thumbnail (circled in red here) in both Grid view and in the Filmstrip, and (b) virtual copies are named Copy 1 (as seen here), Copy 2, and so on.



Sample pages

Step Three:

This virtual copy is pretty much independent from the original, so you can make changes to it, experiment, and get creative with no risk to your original, and again, it doesn't take up any real space on your hard drive, so you can make as many as you want. Let's go ahead and tweak the white balance on this virtual copy. Here, I dragged **Temp** to –2 and **Tint** to –58, and you can see the original (on the left) is untouched. This is why virtual copies are so awesome—you can experiment as much as you want. *Note:* When you edit a virtual copy, you can hit the Reset button at the bottom of the right side panels to return it to how it looked when you first created it. Also, you don't have to jump back to the Library module each time you want to make a virtual copy—that Command-' (PC: Ctrl-') shortcut works in the Develop module, too. To delete a virtual copy, just click on one and then hit Delete (PC: Backspace) .

Step Four:

One thing I use virtual copies for is to try a bunch of different edits to see which one I like the best. For example, go ahead and make seven more virtual copies (so we have a total of nine thumbnails—the original and eight copies) and change the white balance of each one. Then, select all nine and press the **N key** on your keyboard to enter **Survey view** (seen here), so we can clearly see which one (or ones) we like best (and we could mark them as Picks or give them a 5-star rating). To remove a thumbnail from Survey view, move your cursor over it and click the "X" that appears in the bottom-right corner. What's really cool about these virtual copies is that they act just like the real thing. If you wanted to export one as a JPEG, you'd click on it, choose Export from the File menu, and it pings the original to export a copy that looks identical to your virtual copy. It's like they're separate, but they all point to the original if it's time to export or jump over to Photoshop.

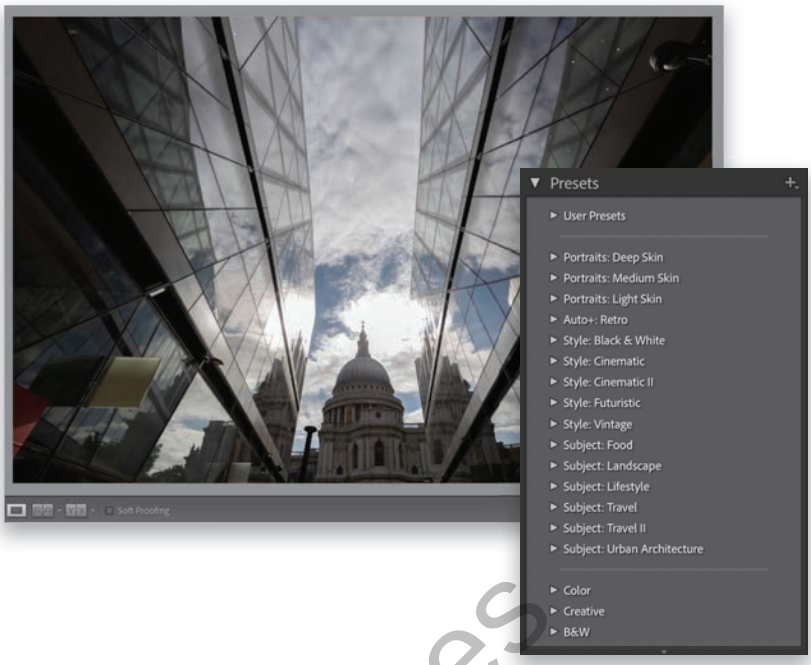
Sample pages

Using Presets for One-Click Looks

Lightroom comes with a decent-sized collection of pre-designed presets, which give you different looks and do different tasks for you. You click on a preset, and it moves all the sliders and settings it needs to create that look for you (it's like having a friend that's really, really good at Lightroom). Besides using the default presets that come built-in with Lightroom, you can find loads of Lightroom presets online (some free, and some not) that you can import and start using in your own work. Here's how to use the ones that are there and how to import any that you download:

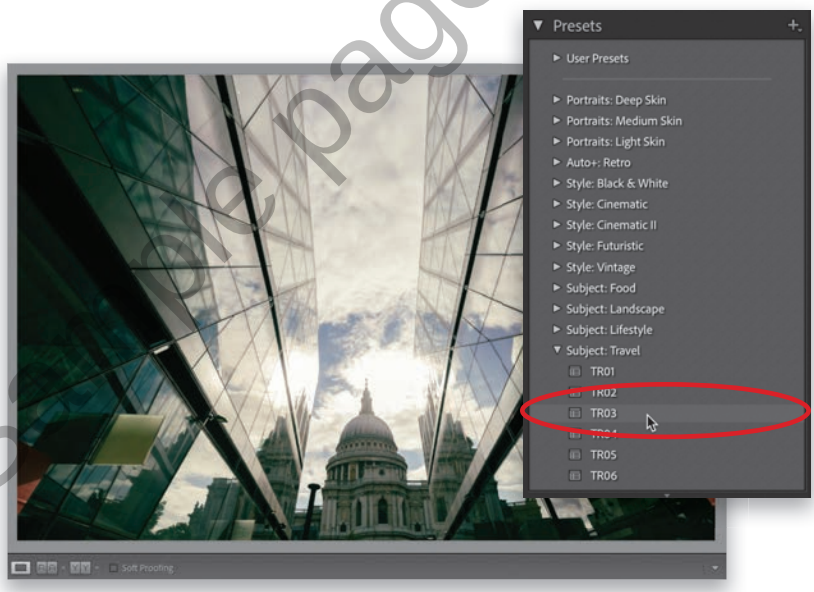
Where They Live:

They're called "Develop presets," so they're found in the **Presets panel** (seen here) in the left side panels of the Develop module. They're separated into groups (sets) to make it easier to find what you're looking for (portrait presets, cinematic looks, futuristic looks, and so on), and then down at the bottom are more production-type presets for sharpening, lens corrections, etc. At the top of the panel are your User Presets (the ones that you create and save yourself—more on these on page 218—or those that you download and import).



Seeing Previews/Applying a Preset:

You can see a preview of how any of these presets will look, even before you apply one, by simply hovering your cursor over it in the Presets panel. The effect appears both up in the Navigator panel, at the top of the left side panels, and on your image itself—as seen here, where I'm hovering over preset **TR03** in the Travel group, which puts a greenish/blue tint on the image and boosts the contrast, among other things. Check out some of the other presets in this group while you're there (I like TR10 a lot), but of course, these can look vastly different depending on the image you're working with. To apply a preset, all you have to do is click on it. If you want to tweak things after the preset has been applied, you can just grab the sliders in the Basic panel and go to town!



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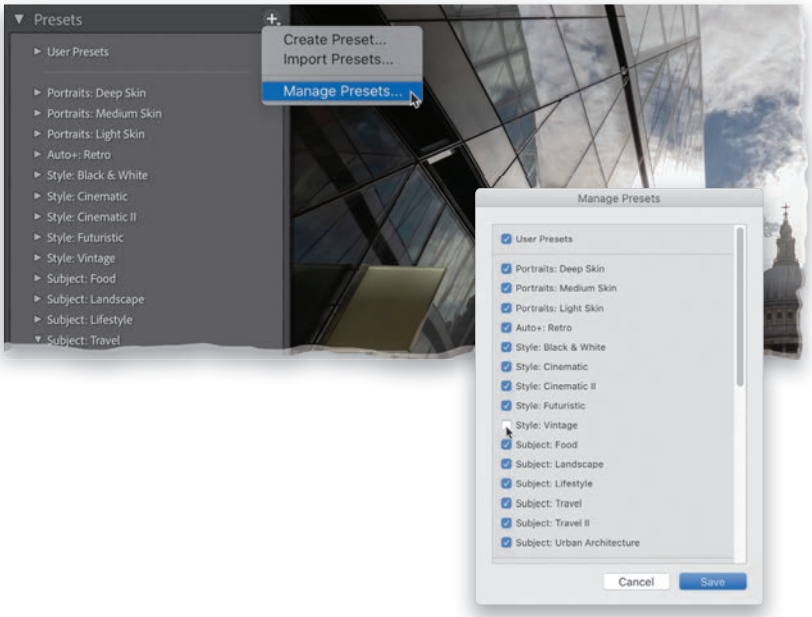
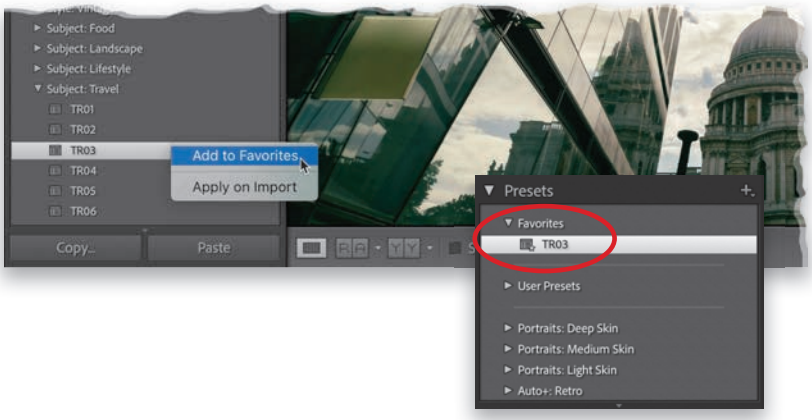


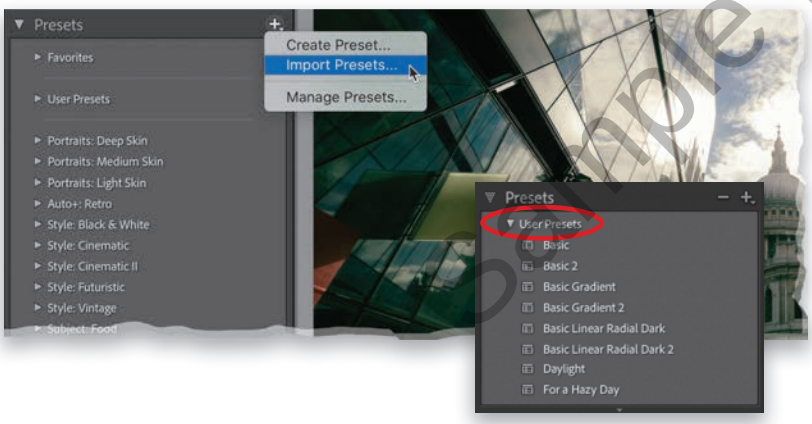
Hiding Presets You Don't Need:

If you find yourself not using Adobe's built-in presets, or if there are just groups of theirs (or anybody else's for that matter) that you don't use, you can hide them from view. It doesn't delete them, so you can make them visible again at any time. Here's how to hide them: In the right side of the Presets panel's header, click on the + (plus sign) button and choose **Manage Presets**. That brings up the Manage Presets dialog (seen here) where you can turn off the checkboxes for any groups of presets you want to hide. Click Save when you're done (and remember, they're not deleted—just hidden). To make them visible again, come back to this same Manage Presets dialog and turn their checkboxes back on.



Saving Favorites:

If you find that you apply certain presets often, you can save them to a Favorites group so they're not only grouped together, but appear right at the top of the panel. To add a preset to your Favorites group, Right-click on the preset and choose **Add to Favorites** (as shown here). Now, when you go to the Presets panel, at the very top, you'll see a new Favorites group and inside it will be just those presets you chose to add as favorites (as seen here, where I added that Travel TR03 preset to my Favorites).



Importing Downloaded Presets:

Like I mentioned, you can find a ton of Lightroom presets online that you can download, import into Lightroom, and apply to your images. Once you've downloaded some, In the right side of the Presets panel's header, click on the + (plus sign) button and choose **Import Presets** (as shown here). Now, just navigate to the preset, or folder of presets you downloaded on your compter, click Import, and you'll now find them under your User Presets group (as seen here).

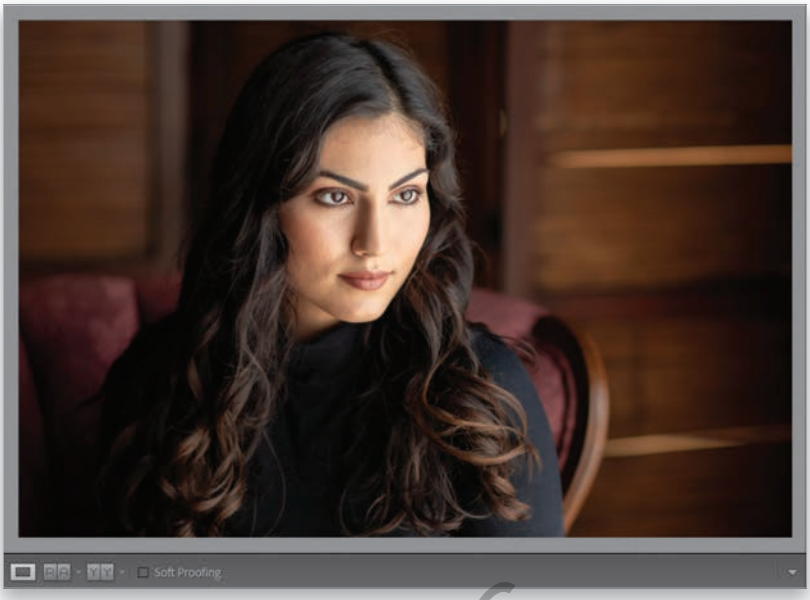
Sample pages

Creating Your Own Presets

If you come up with a look you really like and want to be able to use that same exact look again, you can save those settings as a preset and apply it to a different photo with just one click. You can start from scratch or, of course, you can use any built-in preset as a starting place and customize the look the way you want it, and then you can save that as your own custom preset. Here, we'll look at how to build your own preset from scratch (it's easier than it sounds):

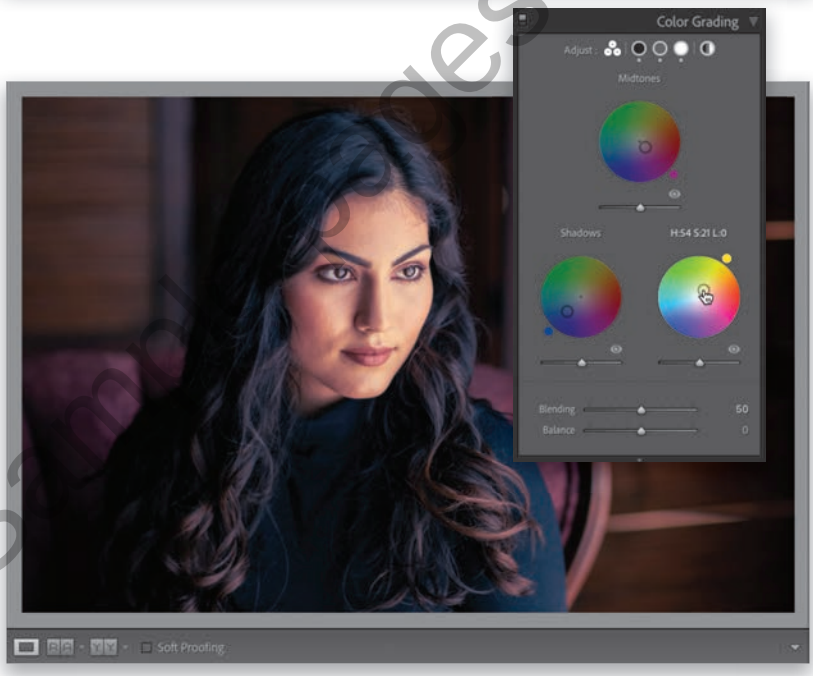
Step One:

The first step is to apply a look you like (in this case, we're starting from scratch, so the image you see here is the original image). What we're going to do here (well, in Step Two) are three simple things: (1) pull back the highlights just a little, so her face isn't too bright; (2) add some color grading; and (3) we're going to add a stronger than usual vignette (darkening) around the outside edges off the image (we'll look at vignetting more on page 225). So, that's the plan, and after we apply those edits, we'll save them as a preset.

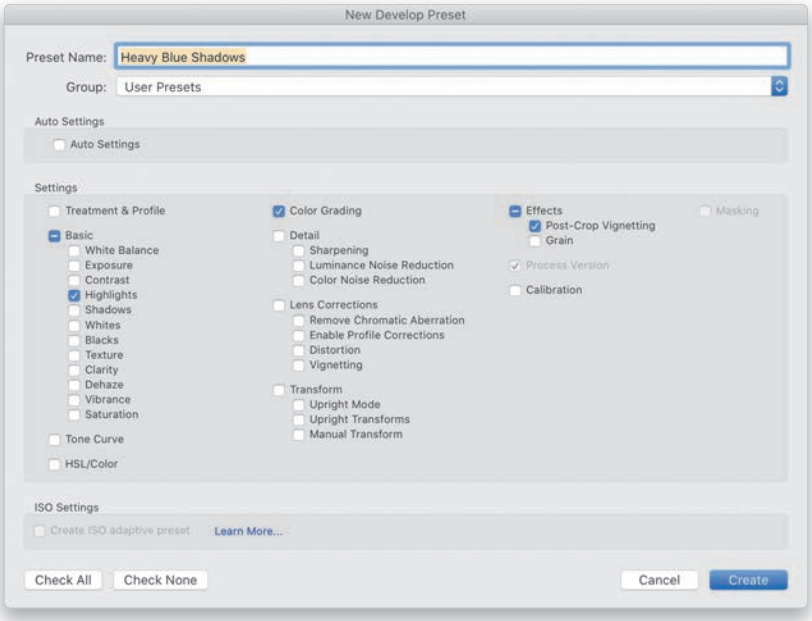


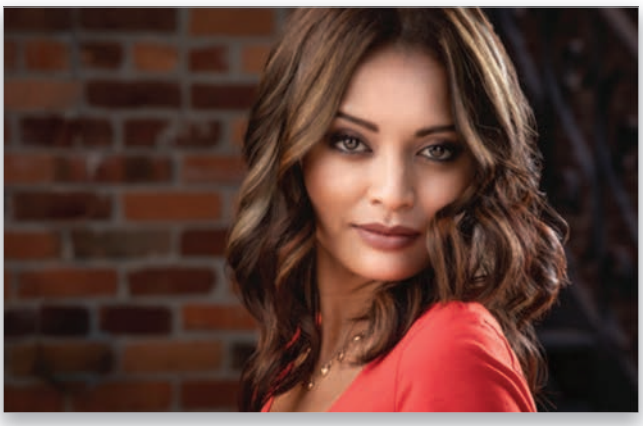
Step Two:

First, go to the Basic panel and just drag the **Highlights slider** to the left a bit (I dragged it to –16). Then, go to the **Color Grading panel**. For the Shadows, click-and-drag the circle in the middle of the color wheel downward toward blue to add lots of blue in the shadows. For the Midtones, click-and-drag the circle in the color wheel toward magenta to add some pink tones there, and lastly, for the Highlights, click-and-drag the circle in the color wheel toward yellow (as shown here). Now, go to the Effects panel and in the **Post-Crop Vignetting section**, drag the Amount slider to the left (I dragged it over to –36, much more than my usual –11, but we're going for a "look," so I pushed it a bit). Now, let's save all these settings as a preset, so we can apply this same look to other photos with just one click.

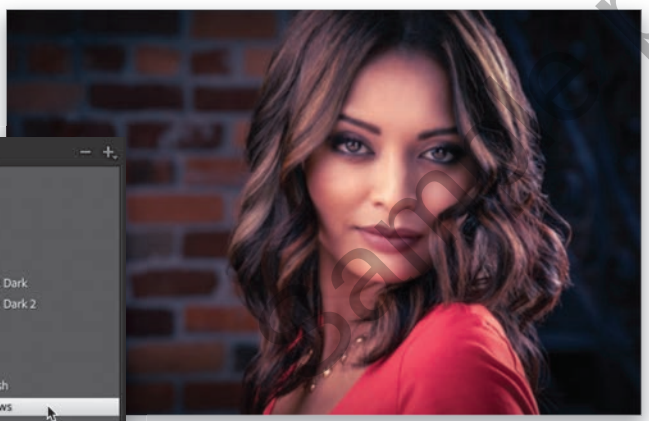


Sample Pages

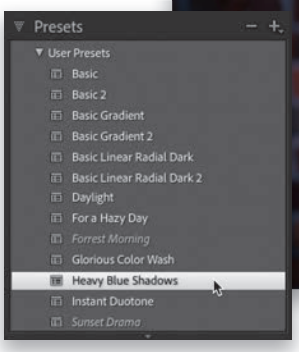




Before



After



Step Three:

In the left side panels, click on the + (plus sign) button in the right side of the Preset panel's header and choose **Create Preset** to bring up the **New Develop Preset dialog** (seen here). Give your new preset a name (I named it "Heavy Blue Shadows"). Now, in the Settings section, we only want to include the things we did to this image (we want the checkboxes beside just those settings turned on) and we want everything else to remain unchecked (turned off). If everything is turned on, a quick way to turn on just the ones we adjusted is to click the Check None button at the bottom left of the dialog, which turns off all the checkboxes for you. Now, just turn on those beside Highlights, Color Grading, and Post-Crop Vignetting (the things we applied, as seen here). You will always need to leave the Process Version checkbox turned on (long story, and a boring one).

Step Four:

Now, click the Create button to save all the edits you just made as your own custom preset, which will appear under the User Presets group in the Presets panel. To apply this preset to a different photo, just click on a photo down in the Filmstrip and then click on the preset in the Presets panel (as shown below).

TIP: Updating a User Preset

If you tweak a User Preset and want to update it with the new settings, Right-click on it in the Presets panel and choose **Update with Current Settings** from the pop-up menu.

TIP: Deleting a User Preset

To delete a User Preset, just click on it, and then click on the – (minus sign) button to the left of the + (plus sign) button in the Presets panel's header .

scanned pages

Creating Presets That Automatically Adapt to Your Image's ISO

If you're just changing the white balance or the Highlights amount, the ISO you shot the image with doesn't matter all that much in the editing process. But, when it comes to things like applying noise reduction (for times when you shot at a high ISO), it does matter. Luckily, you can create presets that can, for example, apply more noise reduction (or less sharpening, etc.) to higher ISO shots automatically. These ISO adaptive presets look at the ISO metadata embedded into the image, so it can apply the right amounts for you. It's pretty slick, and easy to set up.

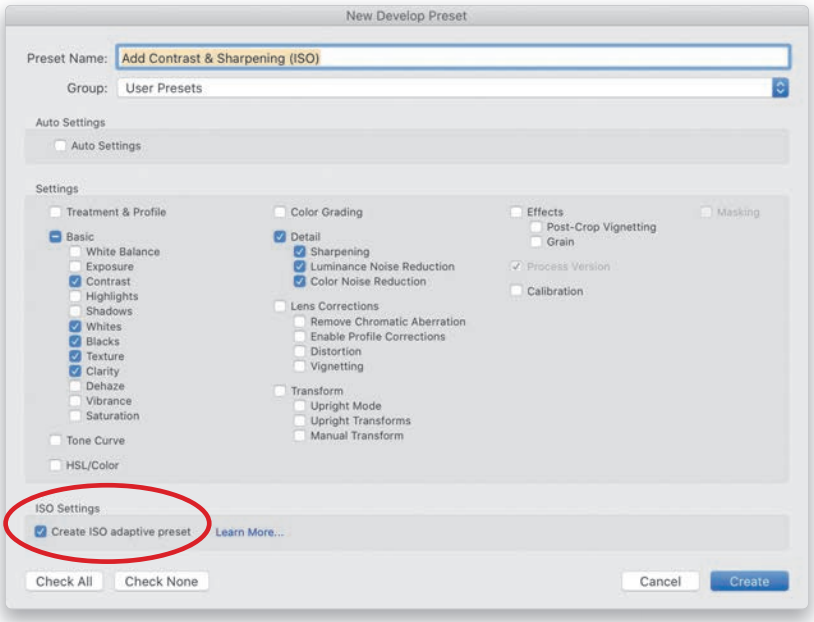
Step One:

This whole idea is based on using at least two (or more) source images to set this up. This would be one photo taken at your camera's cleanest native ISO (for my particular camera, that would have me using one photo taken at ISO 100), and another taken at what would be the top ISO you'd normally use (here, I'm going to use 1,000 ISO, as this preset would be for football shoots during daylight). So, you need two shots like that: one at the low end of your ISO range and one at the high end. You can use more photos if you'd like—I don't, I just go with two—but if you shoot from 100 ISO to 25,600 or higher, then you should use more images in between. Select the low-ISO image and go ahead and create the look you want, including any noise reduction and sharpening. Here, I added Contrast, increased the Whites and Blacks, and added some Texture and Clarity for a high-contrast look, then I went to the Detail panel and increased the **Sharpening Amount** to 90 and the **Radius** to 1.2.

Step Two:

Now, select the image with the higher ISO, and then click the Previous button (at the bottom of the right side panels) to apply the settings we just tweaked on the previous image to this higher-ISO image. On this high-ISO image, go to the Detail panel and in the Noise Reduction section, increase the Luminance and/or Color amounts (see page 258) until the image looks good to you. You can also set what you feel is the appropriate amount of sharpening for this high-ISO image, as well. Basically, get this image looking how you'd like it.

Sample Pages



Step Three:

Now, down in the Filmstrip, Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) to select both images (the low- and high-ISO images), then go to the Presets panel, click the little + (plus sign) button in the right side of the panel's header, and from the pop-up menu, choose **Create Preset**. When the New Develop Preset dialog appears, give your preset a name (you might want to include "ISO" in the name, so you know it's an adaptive ISO preset). If all the checkboxes are turned on, click the Check None button at the bottom left to turn them all off, and then just turn on those for the things you want to include in your preset (don't forget to turn on Sharpening and Noise Reduction). At the bottom of this dialog, in the ISO Settings section, you'll see the **Create ISO Adaptive Preset checkbox**. Turn that on. *Note:* If that checkbox is grayed out, you either (a) don't have at least two images selected, or (b) the two images you have selected don't have different ISOs.

Step Four:

Click the Create button to create your preset, and you can now use it like any other preset. But, when you apply this preset to other images, it will check the ISO the image was taken at and adjust the Noise Reduction and Sharpening amounts appropriately based on the image's ISO. Here, I selected a different image and applied my ISO adaptive preset, and you can see it increased the amount of Luminance and Color Noise Reduction since my ISO was higher than 100, but not as much as in Step Two, to match the lower ISO (320) of this image. Pretty slick stuff, right?

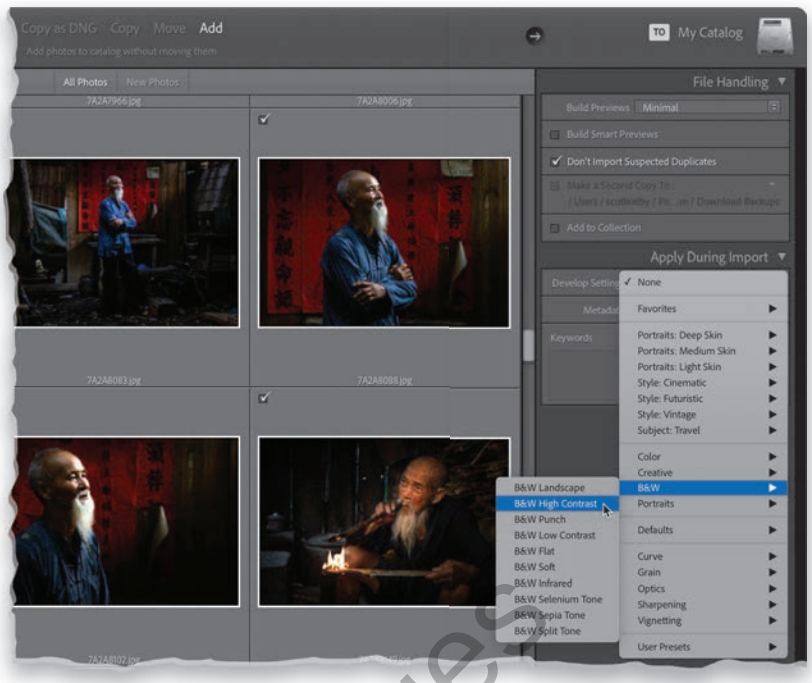
Sample pages

Other Places to Apply Presets

Of course, the most obvious place to apply a preset is from the Presets panel, but there are other places where you can apply them from that can save you time and make your preset life easier.

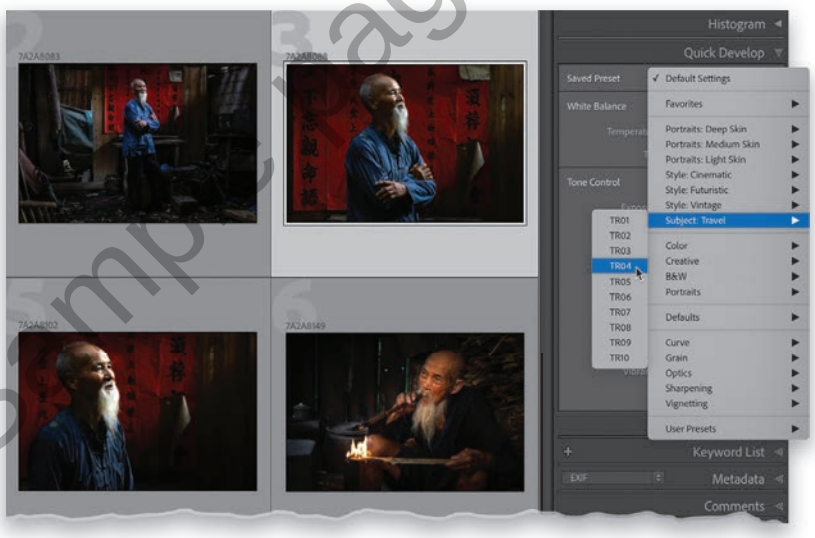
Apply Presets During Import:

If you're planning to apply a particular preset (either a built-in one or one you created) to a bunch of images that you're importing, you can actually have that preset applied to them as they're imported into Lightroom. You do this right within the Import window. Just go to the Apply During Import panel, where you'll choose which preset you want to apply from the **Develop Settings pop-up menu** (as shown here).



Apply Presets in Quick Develop:

Another place you can apply these Develop presets is from right within the Library module in the Quick Develop panel. At the top of the panel, you'll see the **Saved Preset pop-up menu**. Click-and-hold on it and a menu of presets appears (seen here) that you can you apply to your selected photo(s).



Sample Pages

Anytime you have just one color you want to adjust in an image (for example, let's say you want all the reds to be redder, or the blue in the sky to be bluer, or you want to change a color altogether), one place to do that would be in the HSL panel (HSL stands for Hue, Saturation, Luminance). This panel is incredible handy (I use it fairly often) and luckily, because it has a TAT (Targeted Adjustment tool), using it is really easy. Here's how this works:

Changing Individual Colors

Step One:

When you want to adjust an area of color, scroll down to the **HSL panel** in the right side panels. That HSL acronym corresponds to the three tabs you see across the top of the panel: Hue, Saturation, and Luminance. Those aren't just words; those are clickable tabs, and you can adjust each of those attributes separately, which is what we're going to do here (well, in the next step anyway). The Hue panel lets you change an existing color to a different hue by using the sliders, and if you understand which combination of sliders make up the exact color you want to adjust, you can just click-and-drag those sliders. However, for the rest of us, we'll need a little help, and luckily, it's there waiting for us.

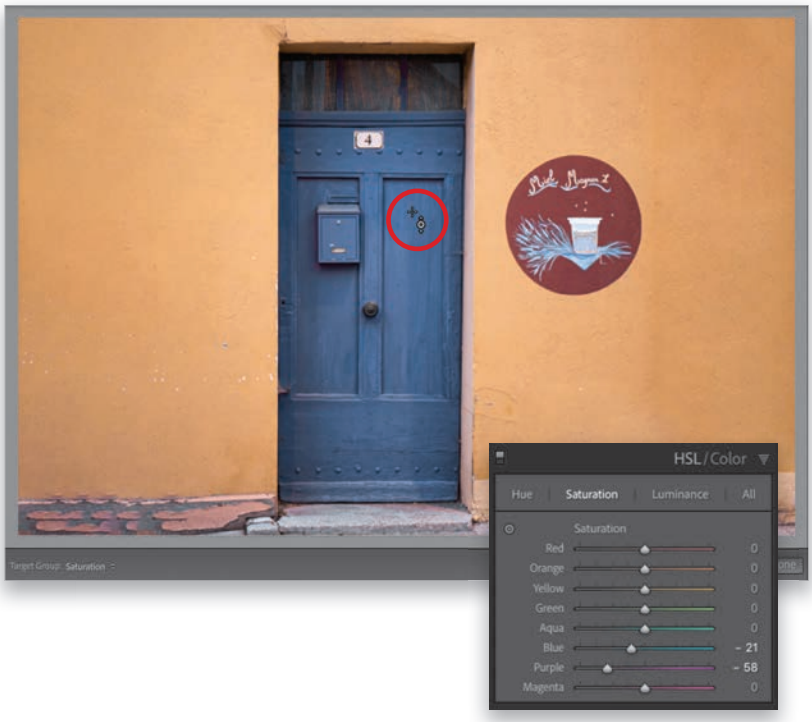
Step Two:

Our color helper is the **Targeted Adjustment Tool** (or TAT, for short), which makes these color adjustments super-easy. First, make sure the **Hue tab** is selected at the top of the panel, then click on the TAT (it's that little round target, circled here in red, near the top left of the panel). Here's how it works: Let's say we want to change the Hue of the door. Click-and-hold the TAT on the door and drag up or down and it knows exactly which sliders correspond to the area where you clicked and it moves only those sliders as you drag up or down (as shown here, where I clicked on the door and dragged downward to change the hue from purple to blue). As I dragged, it moved the Blue and Purple sliders to the left to the right amounts (as seen here).

Sample pages

Step Three:

Okay, so the Hue tab is where we go to change our hue. Now, click the **Saturation tab**, and you'll notice the sliders are all reset to zero. That's because these sliders are just for adjusting saturation (if you click back on the Hue tab, your previous changes will still be in place). Saturation controls how vivid our colors are, so now that you're in the Saturation panel, click-and-drag downward on the door, and you'll see it desaturates the door's colors (as shown here—compare this door to the one in Step Two). If you drag upward instead, it will make that blue door a more vibrant blue, and the farther up you drag and the more it moves those sliders for you, the more vibrant that door will become. Okay, that's the "H" and "S" of HSL. One more to go.



Step Four:

Click on the **Luminance tab** at the top of the panel and a new set of eight color sliders appears all zeroed out. Luminance controls the brightness of a color, so let's use it on the wall. Take the TAT and click-and-drag straight downward on the wall, and as you can see here, its color gets much darker (the luminance for both Orange and Yellow has decreased). Two last things: Clicking the All tab displays all three panels in one long, scrolling, vertical list. If you click on Color in the panel header, it switches to the Color panel, which breaks the colors all into sets with three sliders (HSL) for each color. But, regardless of which layout you choose, they all work the same way.

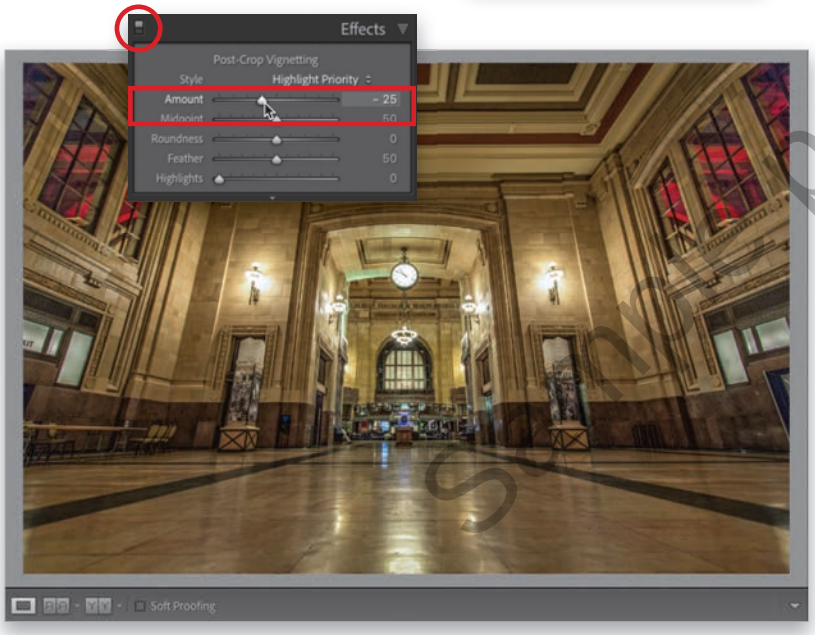
Sample Pages

There are two types of vignetting: The first is the "bad" vignette, which is caused by your lens, and it's when you see dark areas in the corners of your image (I'll show you how to get rid of this on page 284). Then, there's the "good" vignette, which doesn't just appear in the corners. It's a very popular effect that evenly darkens the edges all around your entire image to draw the viewer's eye toward the center. I use this as a finishing effect with a subtle enough amount you wouldn't even know I've added a vignette until you toggle its visibility on/off. Then you'll realize how much a subtle vignette can add.

How to Add Edge Darkening (Vignette) Effects

Step One:

Here's our original image, and we want to subtly darken the outside edges all the way around to draw the viewer's eye to the center and de-emphasize parts that don't matter as much. Plus, it just looks good (as long as it's subtle. If you go too far, 2004 will call and ask for their vignette back). Scroll down to the Effects panel in the right side panels, and you'll see the vignette controls right at the top (it's called **"Post-Crop Vignetting"** because if you crop the image, it will automatically re-adjust itself, so the effect doesn't get cropped away). At the top of this section is the Style pop-up menu and you have three choices: (1) Highlight Priority (the default), (2) Color Priority, and (3) Paint Overlay (though the only one that looks good is Highlight Priority, so it's the only one I ever use).



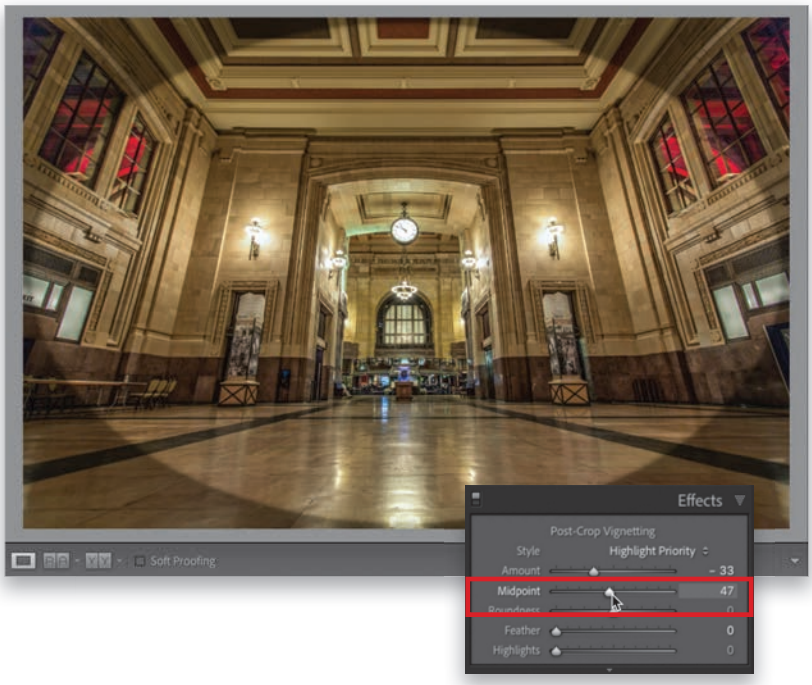
Step Two:

The **Amount slider** determines how dark the edges will be, so go ahead and drag it over to –25 (as I did here) and it adds a fairly subtle edge darkening all the way around the outside edge of your image. Now, looking at this, you might think, "I'm not sure it really did anything," but this will help: in the left side of the panel header is a toggle switch (circled here in red), which turns on/off the effect. Toggle that bad boy on/off a few times and you'll be like, "Ohhhhh. Wow, that does make a difference." Give it a try and you'll see.

Sample pages

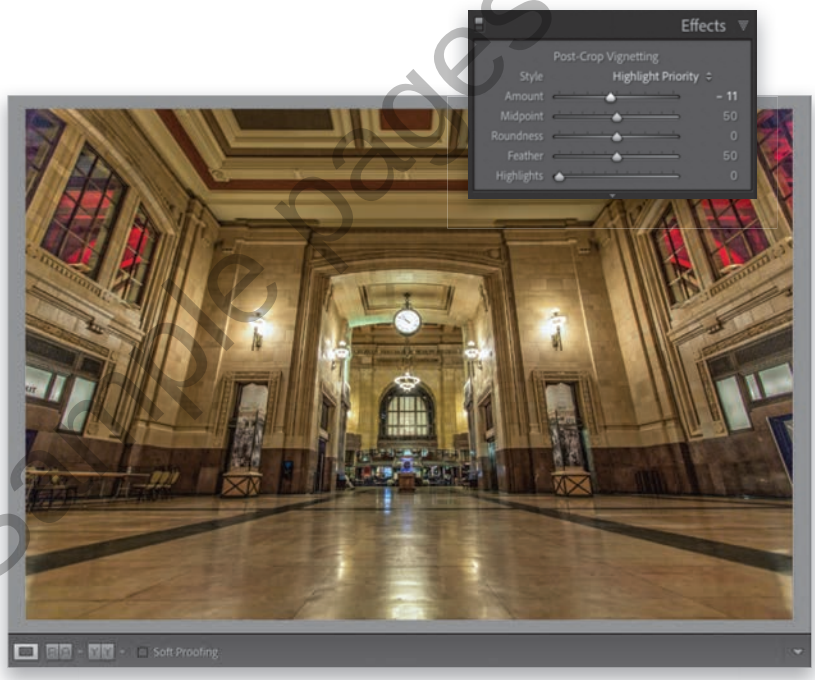
Step Three:

There's only one more slider you might adjust here from time to time and that's the **Midpoint slider**. It controls how far your darkening extends from the edges into your image. Its default setting is actually really good, but to totally "get" what this sliders does, we're going to create something that looks pretty awful (as seen here), but it will really help the learning process. In that Effects panel, drag the **Feather slider** all the way to the left to zero, which gives you a fairly hard edge (as seen here, but outside of this exercise, I never touch the Feather slider—I leave it set at its default of 50). Okay, now drag the Midtone slider back and forth a few times (I also decreased the Amount to –33), and you'll see the oval's size change. As you drag to the right, the oval grows and less and less of the image is getting darkened (the area outside the oval). This will make a lot more sense when you drag the slider yourself, but you can see here, where I made the oval really large, that pretty much just the areas in the corners are getting darkened. If I drag the slider farther to the right, making the oval even bigger, the darkening will literally be only in the corners.



Step Four:

I don't ever mess with the Roundness slider (and you probably won't either), but it controls how round the vignette is. (While you still have the Feather amount set to zero, drag the Roundness slider back and forth to see how it affects the oval. Okay, now reset your Feather amount to 50.) So, I use this edge vignetting in my own workflow as a "finishing move"—something I add at the very end to give the image that little finishing touch—and I have a magic number that I use pretty much every time that adds a very subtle amount (again, toggle it on/off to see what a difference it makes—it's so subtle no one knows I even added it). So, what is this magic number? It's –11. Anticlimatic, I know, but that's what I use.



Sample pages

The "Gritty City" Look

You see this look, and variations of it, all over Instagram every day. A combination of flattening the overall tones and adding "grit" to the image, along with a slight color tint, gives it its own "city" look. It takes a few sliders, and a simple Curves move, but it's really easy. Well, it's easy if you don't mind moving a lot of sliders.

Step One:

Start in the **Basic panel** by clicking the Auto button just to get a reasonable starting place. Now, drag the Whites slider all the way to the left to –100, and then set the Blacks slider to +50. Next, we're going to crank up the "grit" by adding some Clarity (here, I used +34, but depending on the image, you can go as high as +40 or +45). To get kind of a desaturated-skin look, drag the Vibrance slider to the left quite a bit (I dragged it to –40). Don't go too far or you'll wind up with a black-and-white image. You still want some color, but much less vibrant skin tones for the most part (like you see here). You can leave the other sliders where the Auto setting set them (well, for now anyway).

Step Two:

Next, go to the **Tone Curve panel** and make sure the Point Curve is visible (as seen here. Click on the circle with the white dot at the top of the panel if it's not). We're going to use this curve to give our image a "flat" look. So, click on the bottom-left control point and drag straight upward a bit (drag it right along that left side). Then, click in the center of the diagonal curve line and drag downward just a tiny bit to deepen the midtones. Now, click right in between those two control points to add another point, and then drag up a little. In short: make the curve look like the one you see here. If you mess up, just Right-click on a point, choose **Delete Control Point**, and start again.

Sample pages

Step Three:

Now let's bring in a dash of color. Go to the **Color Grading panel**, click on the circle in the center of the Shadows color wheel, and then drag it downward and to the left toward blue. Next, go over to the Highlights color wheel, click in the center of that wheel, and then drag the circle a little way toward yellow. Just a little—don't drag too far or you'll get very saturated yellows in your highlights. Now, you see the slider beneath the Shadows color wheel? That controls the brightness (luminance) of the color you added to the shadows. In this case, drag that slider almost all the way to the left. Then, drag the luminance slider beneath the Highlights color wheel almost all the way to the right to brighten the highlights color. Lastly, near the bottom of the panel, drag the Blending slider way over to the right (here, I dragged it to 69). Depending on your photo, you might have to play with these color wheels a bit to get blues in your shadows and yellows in your highlights, so it might take a second to dial those in, but you know what you're going for—a hint of added color, not a big crushing tint.

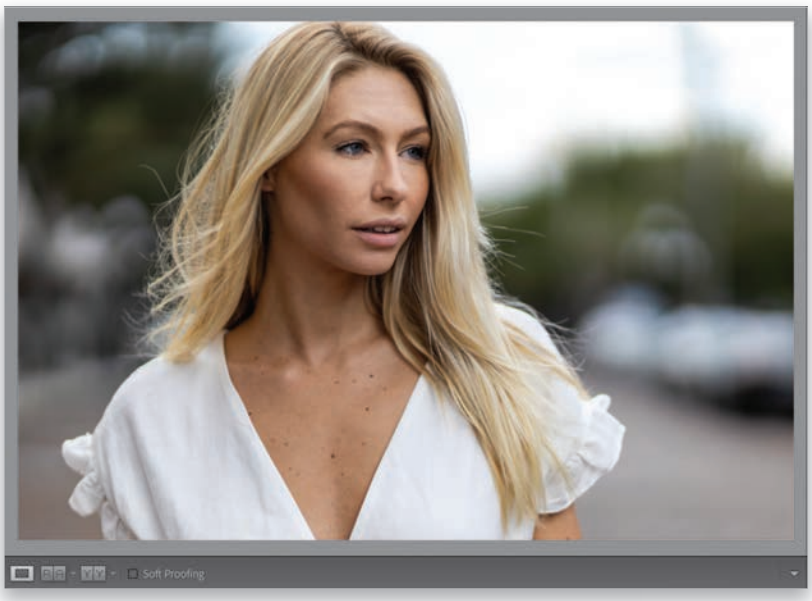
Step Four:

The final step in bringing the overall grit factor up (at least on this photo) is to go back to the Basic panel and (1) drag the **Contrast slider** way over to the right (I dragged it to +54), and then (2) drag the **Highlights slider** to the right, as well (to around zero), to create even more contrast. That's a lot of slider moving, but you're there. Now, save this as a preset (see page 218), so you can apply this gritty city look to other images.

Sample Page

This matte finish look has become really popular in the last couple of years, and luckily, it's pretty easy to pull off. It's just a simple Curves move (and even if you've never used Curves before, you'll be able to do this).

Creating a Matte Look



Step One:

Here's the original image we want to apply our matte look to (or upon, or some word so my sentence doesn't end with a preposition. However, Grammarly says this: "It's not an error to end a sentence with a preposition, but it is a little less formal. In emails, text messages, and notes to friends, it's perfectly fine." So, since we're all friends here, here's the original image we want to apply our matte look to. Drops the mic).

Step Two:

Go to the **Tone Curve panel** in the right side panels, and in the bottom-left corner of the curve grid, click on that round control point, and drag straight up, right along the left edge, until you reach the first horizontal grid line to create a low-contrast look (of course, depending on the image, you might need to drag a little higher or lower to make it look washed out and low-contrasty, so don't get hung up on that "hitting the grid line" thing). Now, just drag that point a bit over to the right and that blotches up the blacks and gives you the look. That's it—you've got the matte look, and are ready to rule Instagram like a boss!

Sample pages

Making Great Duotones

This is such a simple technique, but it's so effective. I learned this trick years ago from my buddy and Adobe Worldwide Evangelist, Terry White, who learned it from another photographer who works for Adobe, and now I'm passing it on to you. Of all the methods I've used to create duotones over the years, this is definitely the easiest, but crazily enough, it's also the best.

Step One:

Although the actual duotone is created in the Color Grading panel (in the right side panels), to get the classic duotone look, you should convert your image to black and white first. So, go to the **Profile Browser**, by clicking on the icon with the four little rectangles in the top right of the Basic panel, and scroll down to the B&W profiles (see page 212 for more on these). For now, just find one that looks good to you as a starting point, click on it to apply your black-and-white conversion (I chose B&W 04 here), and then click the Close button in the top right of the browser. *Note:* You can get this before/after view by pressing the **Y key** on your keyboard.

Step Two:

The trick to creating duotones is actually incredibly simple: you only add the color tint in the shadows, and you leave the highlights and midtones completely untouched (as tempting as it may be to mess with them, don't do it). Go down to the **Color Grading panel** and you'll see three color wheels. The bottom-left wheel controls the shadows, so click-and-hold in the center of the wheel and drag just a little ways upward toward a brown tone (as shown here). The farther you drag, the more saturated and vivid the color becomes, but we want a subtle amount of tint here, so just drag a little ways from that center. You can rotate that outside orange pin a little to dial in the exact brownish hue you want (or you could choose a different hue, maybe a blue or reddish duo color). That's it.

Sample Pages