

# Chapter Four

## Retouching

### Learning the Essential Components of the Develop Module



Having a basic understanding of all the different capabilities of Lightroom will help you become a Jedi master of retouching and photographic post-processing. While it's fun to jump straight into the step by step follow along professional work flow projects that I have in Part 5 of this book, by the nature of them you are just being told to do certain steps, but not why you are doing them.

If you take a little time to understand all the key functions you will be using, when you dive into the projects, suddenly things will make a lot more sense and you won't be doing things just because "Serge told you to," but will be able to make artistic choices that you might otherwise have missed.

So read through this section and follow along using the photos I've included for this section or with your own and learn about the power of the **Develop module**,

this is the heart and soul of what makes Lightroom such a powerful tool in the photographer's arsenal.

## An Overview of the Develop Module

The **Develop module** is where you are going to be doing a bulk of your photographic retouching work. It has been created and set-up so that you can intuitively find your way around and work with a set of powerful tools to get your photographs looking amazing and ready for sharing or printing.

From the earlier chapters, you should already be used to the idea of modules and panels and how they work. In the Develop module you have the **Toolbar** and **Film Strip** below the Photo Display Area as well as a set of Panels on either side.



Tip: Most of these panels have a toggle switch at the top left so you can quickly turn them on and off to get a comparison of the photo with and without the adjustments being made in that specific panel.

### A. Navigator Panel

Shows a thumbnail of the photo you are working on and has a box to show any area being zoomed into.

## B. Presets Panel

Here you have Lightroom Presets which are preset options for applying specific one-click looks or treatments to your photos.

## C. Snapshots Panel

Sometimes it's nice to keep track of where you are going while you are retouching and snapshots allow you to save photo states so you can look back at them.

## D. History Panel

Shows every change made to the photo during your retouching process and allows you to rapidly undo or redo changes.

## E. Copy/Paste Buttons

Allows you to rapidly copy all the Develop settings from any photo you want and paste them onto any other photo you want.

## F. The FilmStrip

An easy way to see all the photos that you are reviewing in the module and filter them.

## G. The Toolbar

The toolbar allows you to rapidly switch views, navigate, assign or change attributes, display a grid and other useful options for working with your photos.

## H. Photo Display Area

This is where your photos are displayed for retouching.

## I. Module Navigator

You can jump between the different Lightroom Modules here.

## J. Toolstrip

Here you have tools for cropping and straightening photos, fixing red eye, removing blemishes as well as making small and large changes to specific areas of your images.

#### K. Histogram Panel

This is a look at your photo's histogram to measure and adjust color tones. Also in this panel you will find additional information about your photo and the status of Smart Previews associated with the photo. If you want to know more about histograms, you can find a full explanation of histograms on my youtube channel and blog.

#### L. Previous/Reset Buttons

Allows you to rapidly apply all the Develop settings from the **previous** photo you retouched on to the new one. Or **reset** a photo entirely to how it used to be before you started retouching it. Very cool and handy.

#### M. Adjustment Panels

A series of panels all aimed at giving you ways to stylize, retouch and get your photos exactly how you want them:

**M1. Basic Panel** has the main tools for adjusting White Balance, Tonal Scale, Color Saturation, Clarity and Vibrance.

**M2. Tone Curve and HSL/Color/B&W Panels** help you fine tune adjustments to your color and tonal values. (HSL stands for Hue/Saturation/Luminance)

**M3. Split Toning Panel** helps add color to black and white photos as well as interesting color effects on color images.

**M4. Detail Panel** is for reducing noise and adjusting sharpness.

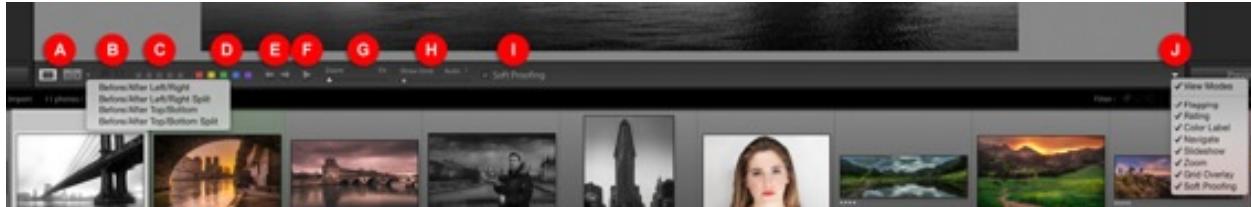
**M5. Lens Correction Panel** helps you fix chromatic aberration and lens vignetting and distortion caused by the camera lens.

**M6. Effects Panel** is where you can add film grain and create vignetting effects.

**M7. Camera Calibration Panel** is where you adjust how Lightroom interprets the colors from the camera.

## Using The Toolbar In The Develop Module (T)

The Toolbar is going to become a usual suspect in your professional work flow. And as I mentioned in the first part of this book there are differences in the different modules of Lightroom as to what tools are on the Toolbar. So let's rapidly cover what's in the Develop toolbar.



#### A. Viewing Modes

Allows you to switch through the two main Develop viewing modes: **Develop (D)** and **Before/After (Y)** with four different **Before/After** viewing options.

#### B. Flag/Pick System

The Lightroom **Flag** attribute tool allows you to set Flags on your photos tagging them as **Picked**, **Rejected**, or if left with no flag, **Unflagged**.

#### C. Rating System

The Lightroom **Star Rating** attribute tool allows you to set one to five stars to help you organize and easily find certain photos.

#### D. Color Label System

The Lightroom **Color Label** attribute tool allows you to set colors to help you organize and easily find certain photos.

#### E. Navigate Tool

Jump between photos to the left or right of the photo selected and seen in the Film Strip.

#### F. Slideshow Tool

Play your selected photos as a rough slideshow.

#### G. Zoom Slider

Allows you to zoom in and out of your photos rapidly by moving the slider either right or left.

#### H. Grid Slider

Allows you to display a grid over your photos for reference and to increase the size of the grid with the slider by moving it left or right.

#### I. Soft Proofing

This allows you to activate Soft Proofing and see how your photos will appear in printed format and adjust them for optimum display.

#### J. Toolbar Options

A dropdown menu that allows you to choose what tools you want displayed on the toolbar for easy access and use.

## The Two Viewing Modes In The Develop Module

The Lightroom Develop module has its own specific viewing modes and ways to personalize them.

Similar to the Library module, you can access these through keyboard shortcuts or icons on the **Toolbar** on the bottom left of the display area.



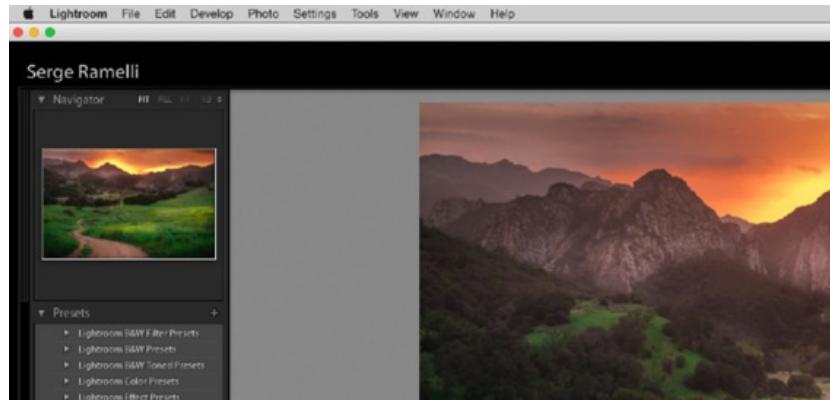
If for some reason you don't see your **Toolbar** go ahead and press [\(T\)](#) to bring it up.

## Loupe View (D)

**Loupe view** displays your photos as single images in the display area pretty much exactly the same as it did in the Library module. But if you were to press the keyboard shortcut [\(E\)](#) you would suddenly find yourself back in the Library Module and not in Develop. This annoyed me at first until I saw that it was actually a pretty cool way to jump between Library and Develop on your photos. Sheesh, those Adobe people, almost too smart for their own good!

### Displaying Loupe Photo Information (I)

Similar to **Loupe** view in the Library module, you can quickly cycle through three different information displays and personalize them. Here's how: Go ahead and from Loupe view, press [I](#) once (no overlay):



Press **L** again (overlay 1):



And press **I** again (overlay 2):



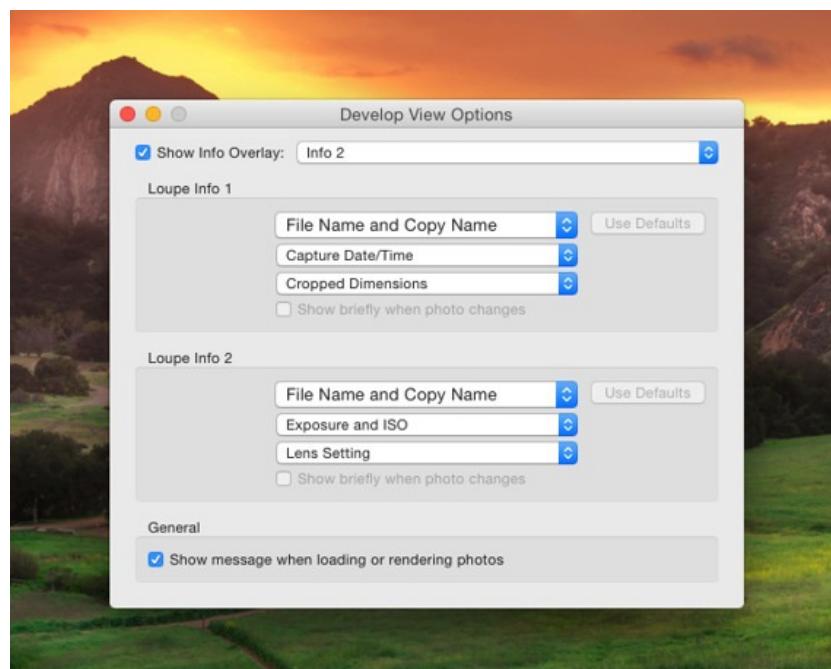
Can you see the differences of information detail level? Good.

You can also toggle this information on and off from the View drop down menu at the top of Lightroom, **View> Loupe Info.**



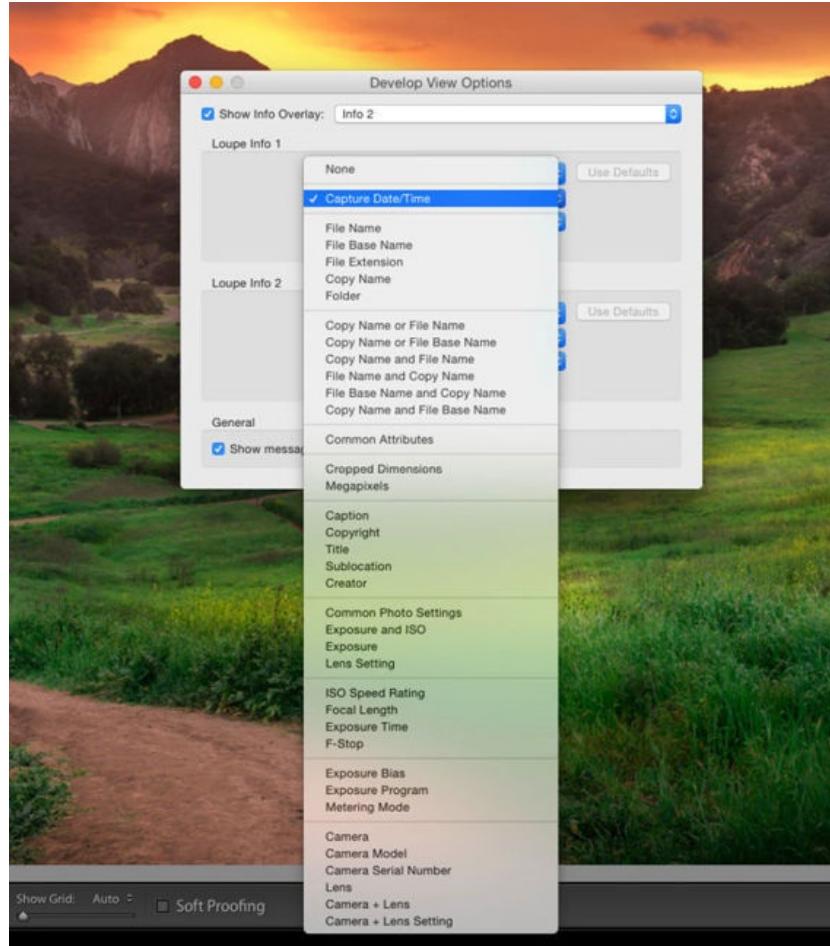
## Personalizing Loupe Photo Information (Command J)

Lightroom also gives you a way to personalize the info you are displaying in Loupe view just like it did in the Library module. From inside **Loupe** mode, press **Command J** and a similar pop-up window opens and you can personalize the information however you want!



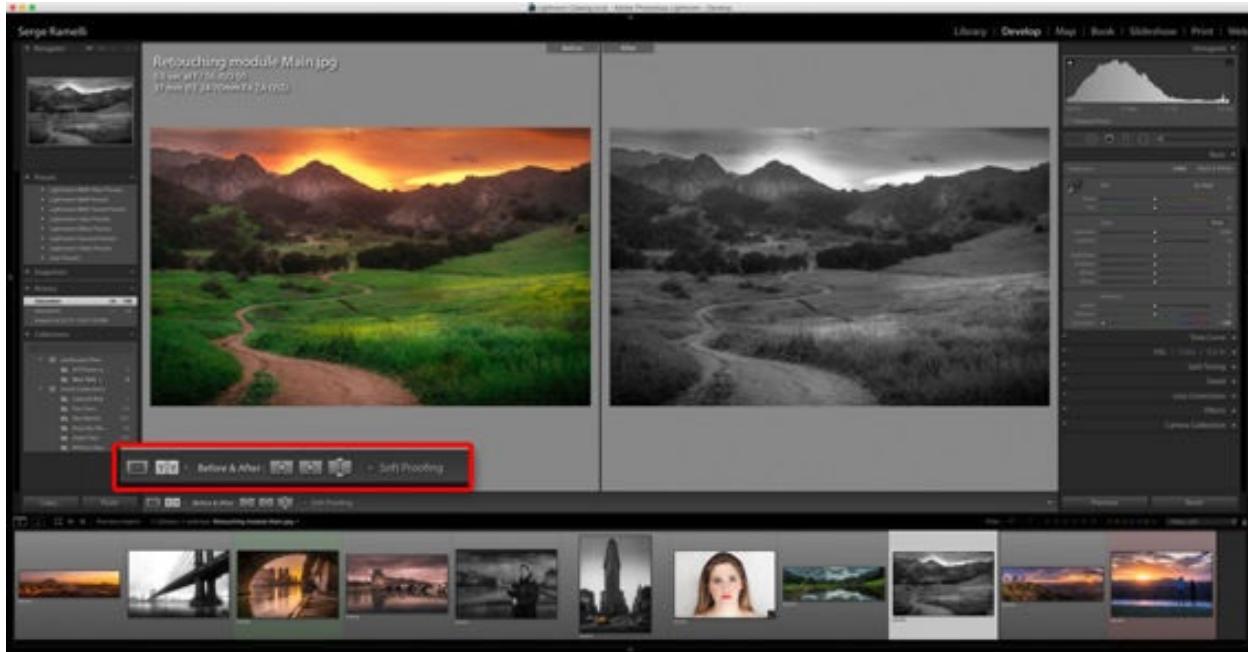
Again, you have many options of the type of information you can display in the different **Info Overlays**. Figure out what would be most useful you for either

mode and then in the **Loupe Info 1** and **Loupe Info 2** options area you can select from almost 40 different options!



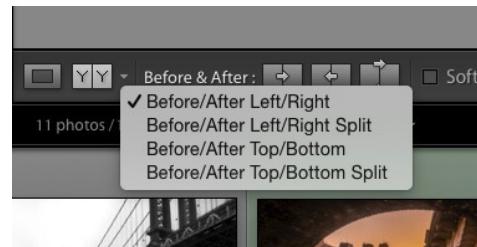
## Before/After View (Y)

This is similar to the **Compare** view in the Library module. But in the Develop module the **Before/After** view mode allows you to compare the photo to where it is now in your retouching process and how it was before you started. Again, a really convenient option for rapid reviewing as part of your work flow. It also has a ton of options to customize the view and transfer settings.



Another great feature of the **Before/After** view is that (just like Compare view in Library module) when you zoom in one photo it zooms in on the other in the exact same spot.

The default screen displays the image before retouching on the left and after retouching on the right, but if you look at the small icons you will see a small drop down arrow, click on it and it reveals a menu of view options.



**Before/After Left/Right** is the option you see above. But let's take a look rapidly at each of the other three options:

**Before/After Left/Right Split.** What you get now is a split screen effect which is cool because you can see the retouching .



**Before/After Top/Bottom.** Well, the title is pretty explanatory but as you can see, you now have the before photo on the top and the after on the bottom.



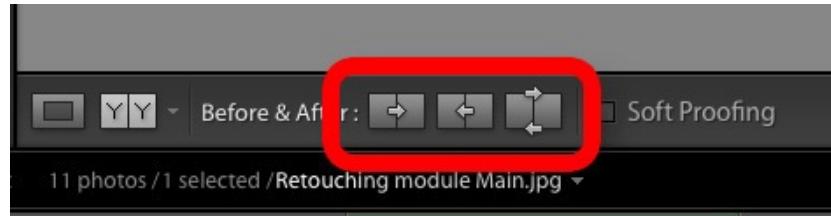
**Before/After Top/Bottom Split.** And this just allows you to see it with a split view instead of full photos so that one half has the before look and the other has the after.



You can also access these view options from the drop down menu at the top of Lightroom.



The last thing I'll mention about this view is those 3 little icons in the toolbar when **Before/After** is selected.



They basically just let you swap around where the settings are being applied. It's easiest if you just play around with them to get the hang of how they work, but the arrows do provide a strong visual clue as to how to use them whether you are working in **Left/Right** or **Top/Bottom**.

## Basics Of Using The Develop Module



The Lightroom **Develop module** is a powerful set of tools to help you rapidly get amazing looking photos. I briefly mentioned a number of these tools in the overview of the Develop module layout at the outset of this chapter. You have your Histogram panel, the Toolstrip, Basic Panel, Tone Curve, HSL/Color/B&W, Split Toning, Detail, Lens Corrections, Effects, Camera Calibration.

If you have no idea what those are for or what they mean, have no fear! I'm now going to take you through these one by one and show you how you can use them

to enhance your photographs. If you've downloaded the photos for this book, then you can follow along with this image I took at Malibu State Park as I walk you through how to do this!

## The Histogram Panel

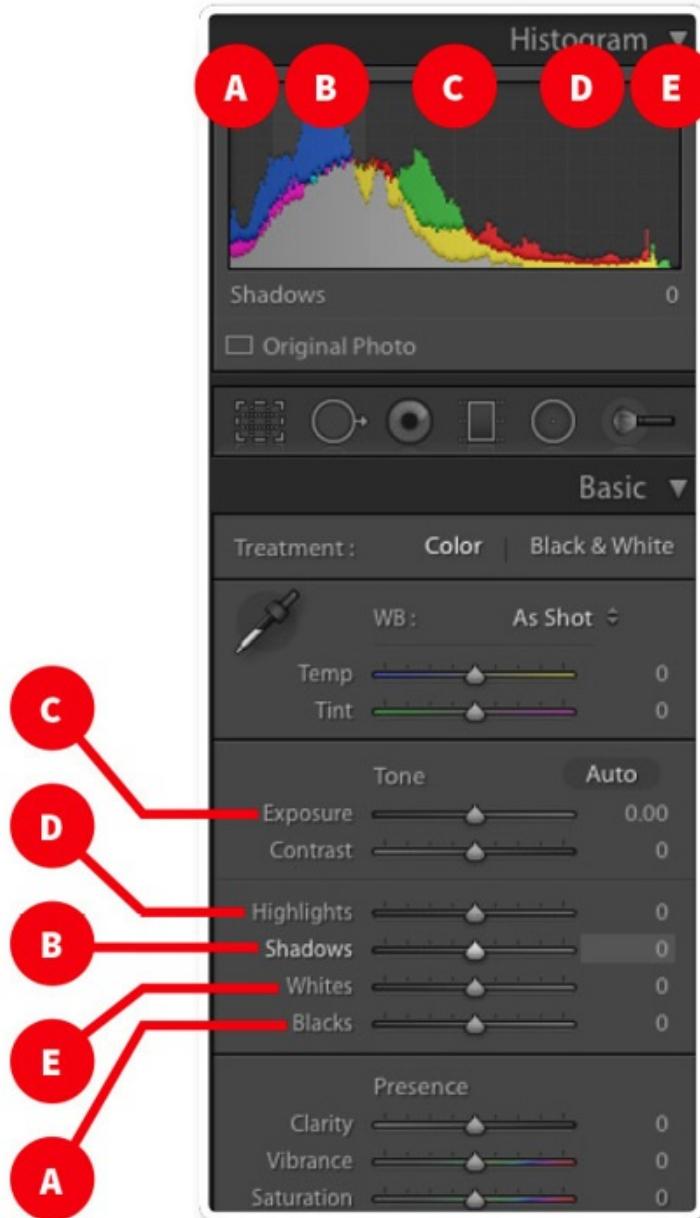
If you aren't already very familiar with histograms and how they work, I've covered them in detail on my blog at [www.photoserge.com](http://www.photoserge.com). At the top right of your Lightroom screen you will find your Histogram panel. It shows you the information contained in the histogram as well as some key camera settings when the photo was taken.



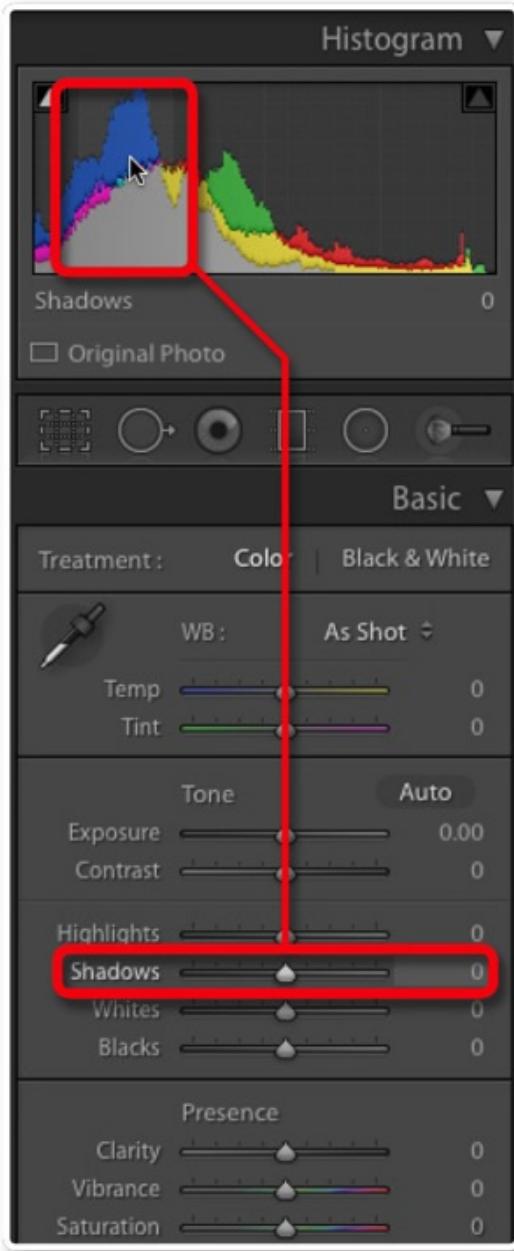
### The Relationship Between the Histogram Panel and the Basic Panel

You have 5 areas in your Lightroom histogram:

a. Blacks, b. Shadows, c. Exposure/Mid-tones, d. Highlights and e. Whites.  
These correlate directly to the adjustments in the Basic Panel.



Even hovering over any one part of the histogram will highlight that slider in the **Basic panel** and vice versa.



So keep an eye on it as it will help you see how you are distributing the color information in your photo.

## Using The Basic Panel

In the **Basic panel** you have a lot of sliders which you can use to make the basic adjustments to your image.

These include: Color or Black & White, White Balance, Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Whites, Blacks as well as Clarity, Vibrance and

Saturation. I'll explain what these are as we go or you can look these up in the glossary.

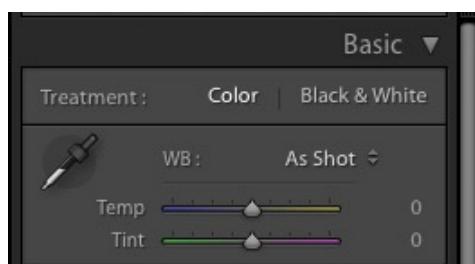
For those of you familiar with my work, when I shoot photos, I expose for the highlights and utilize Lightroom to really bring out the details in the other parts of my photos. So a lot of this work gets done in the Basic panel.



Tip: double clicking on any slider in the panel will reset it to 0!

### Choosing A Treatment

Working down from the top, the first thing you will see in your Basic Panel is **Treatment**. You have two options: **Color** or **Black and White**. You need to pick whether you will be working on your photo in color or black and white. It's that simple. For now we are going to talk about color and will get into Black and White later.



Now I'm going to skip over the **White Balance** setting for a moment because

the first thing I do is get a correct general exposure and contrast of the image by using the **Shadows**, **Highlights**, **Whites** and **Blacks** sliders in the **Basic panel**. And I do this starting with my **Shadows**.

## Adjusting the Shadows

When you play with the **Shadows** slider, you are adjusting the darker image areas or pixels of your photo. Moving the slider to the left makes your shadows darker. Moving it to the right brightens the shadow areas and recovers image detail in the darker parts of your photo.

Because I expose for the highlights I only really start to see my image when I open up the shadows to 100 percent. Look at the difference!



The dark areas are now much brighter! And look at the difference in the **Histogram**, you can see the information is now starting to spread out across the entire range instead of just clumping on one end of this histogram.



Next slider!

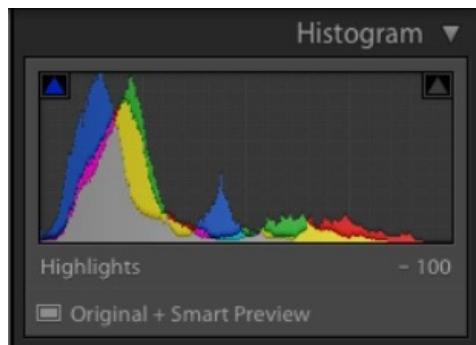
### Adjusting the Highlights

When you play with the **Highlights** slider, you are adjusting the bright image areas. Moving it to the left will help you recover blown out details (also referred to as clipped) and darken the highlight areas overall. Moving it to the right will start to lighten the highlights.

So now I'm going to drag my **Highlights slider** down to -100, and again we are recovering details but now in the brighter parts of the image. Look at how much more detail is visible in the sky for example.



Again, compare the histograms and you will see that the information is more evenly distributed across all areas of the whole histogram.

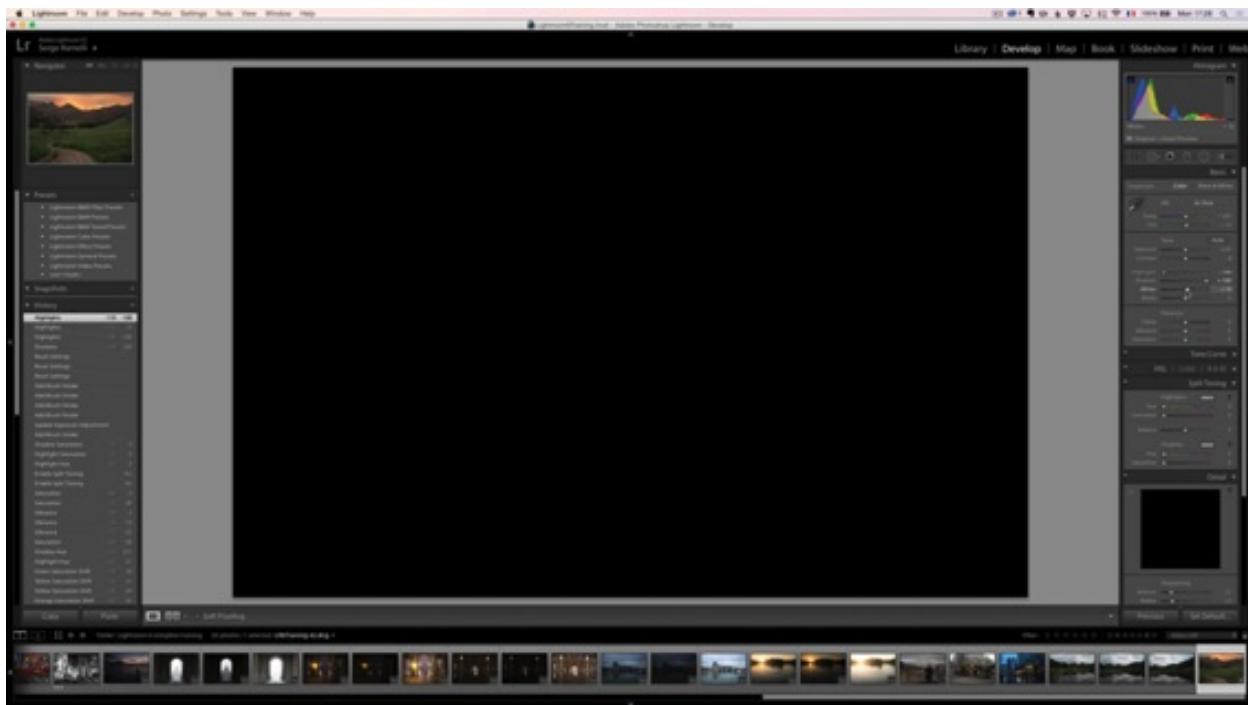


## Adjusting Your White Point

A White point is a point that is 100% pure white, meaning that there is absolutely no color detail visible in those pure white areas. Those details are clipped, gone, gonaroo, vamanoosed, vanquished, forever more invisible and so on.

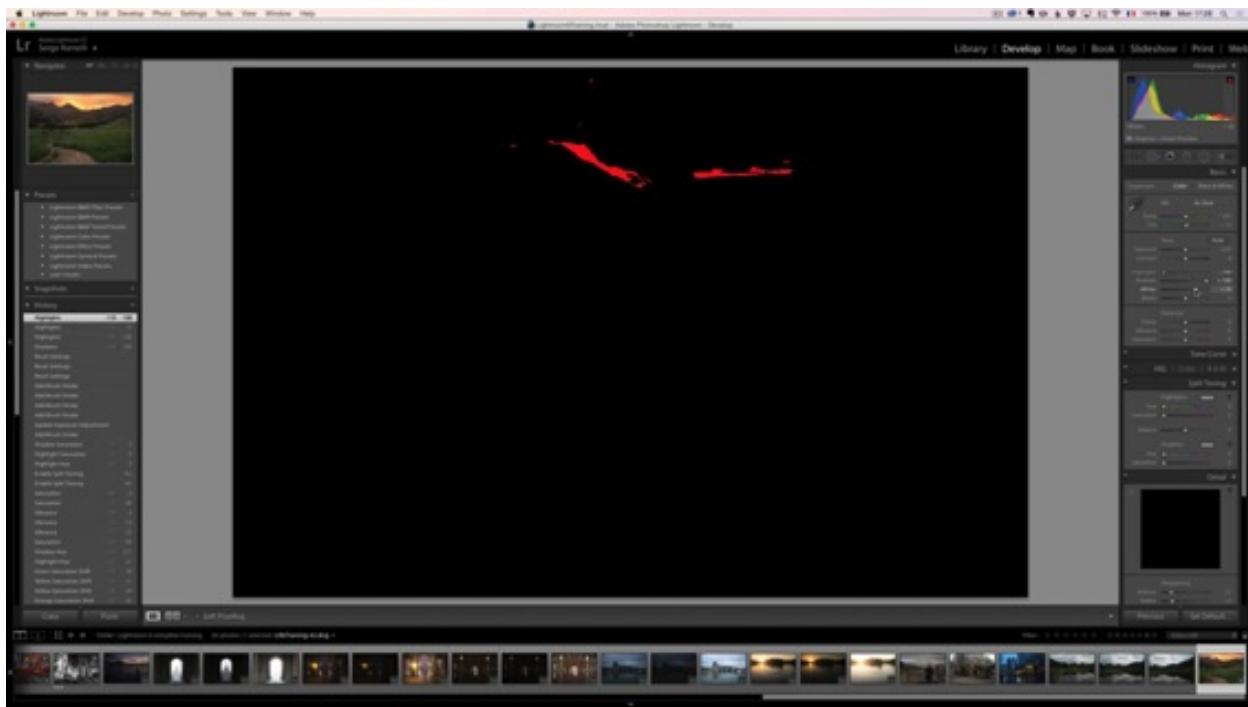
Using the **Whites slider** allows you to set what parts of the image fall into that clipped, pure white area. And as a general rule of thumb you want to adjust your whites until you just start to clip them. This isn't always easy to do by eye, but Lightroom makes it simple.

If you hold down the **Alt key** on your keyboard and click on the **Whites slider**, your photo area will go black.



As you move it to the right, you will start to see some color patches show up,

those tell you where you have clipped image information.



The other way to see this is by clicking on that small triangle in the upper right hand corner of your **Histogram tool**, and then move your **Whites slider** and it will show you where they are clipped in your image as you will see colors over those areas.



Click on the triangle again to turn this off.

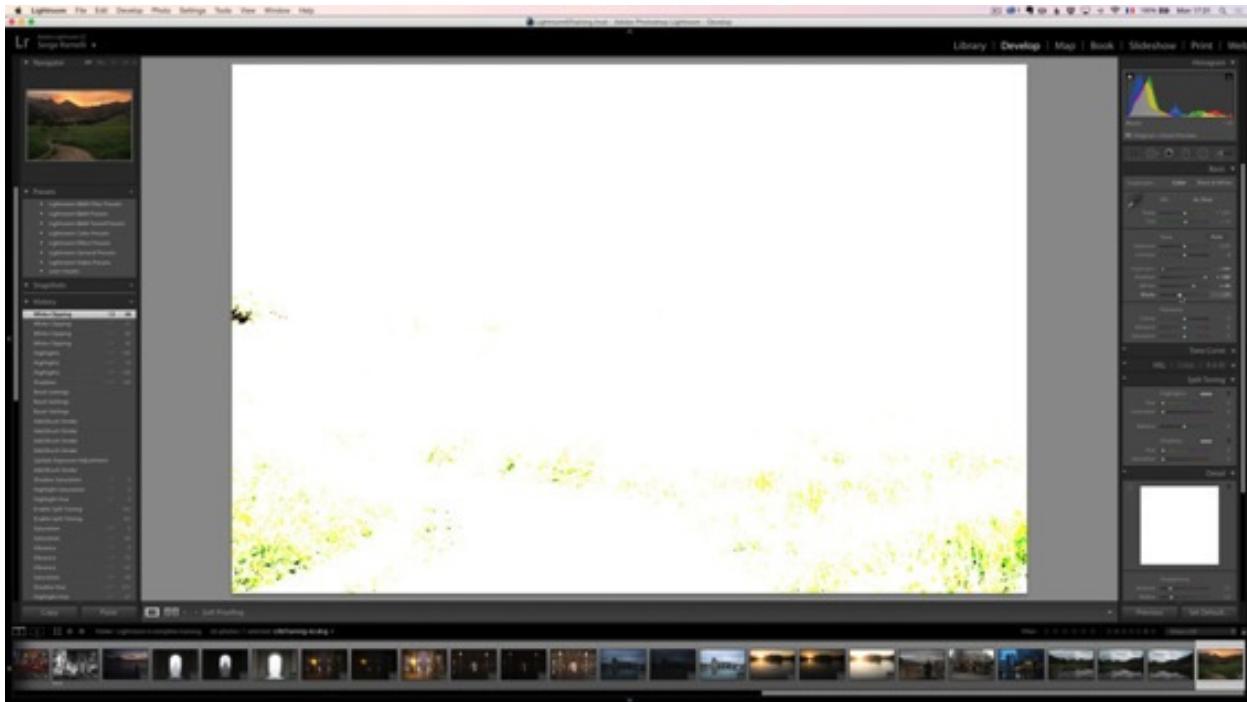
## Setting Your Black Point

Now you have your Black point, and blacks (similar to whites) are areas of pure black with no other color detail visible. So setting the black point is basically the same thing you just did but instead of finding/setting the point where the brighter areas are going to be clipped, that's right you got it, it's for where the darker areas get clipped.

So go ahead and hold down the Alt key, your photo display will go white.



And then as you move your **Blacks slider** to the left you will see the colored areas showing you where you are 100% black.

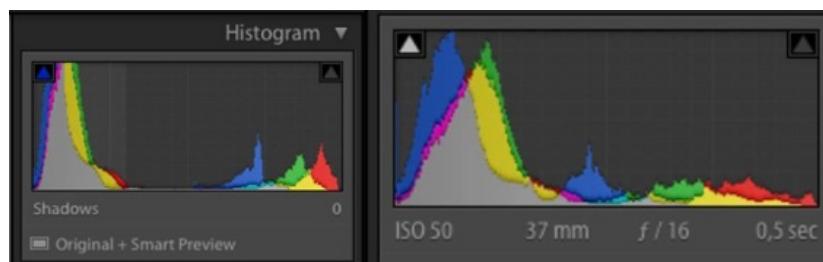


While I do not like to have whites that are clipped, I do like to have areas of my photos that are pure black so I will just push it a little bit, putting some of the darks to 100% black. To me, it helps make the image pop. But that's just my taste.

And similar to your white point, clicking the triangle in the upper left hand corner of the Histogram will show you the clipped blacks on your image, and this can be turned off again by clicking on the triangle.



And before moving on, let's compare the histograms so you can see how we've now got so much more of the image information spread out across the whole histogram instead of being bunched in the shadows and the highlights:



It's true that there is still a lot of information on the left, but that's also because it's a dark photo.

Now of course this work flow of doing 100% Shadows and -100% Highlights won't work for every photo, but we will get into a bunch of different ways to retouch in the next part of the book, for now just focus on understanding what these tools are doing to your image.

## Adjusting Your Exposure

The **Exposure** setting in Lightroom is really tinkering with the overall brightness of the photo and largely influences the midtones in your image that sit between the highlights and the shadows. And how Lightroom has it set-up is that the values here match up to f-stops on your camera. So +1 is the equivalent of opening your aperture a full stop and -1 is closing it down a full stop.

Moving the **Exposure slider** to the right will push it towards being overexposed:



And moving the slider to the left will push the photo towards being underexposed:



And on this photo I want it to be a little dark so I'm going to leave it a tad underexposed.

### Adjusting Your Contrast

The slider right below **Exposure** is **Contrast**. We all know what contrast is right? Increasing contrast is going to make anything that is dark darker and anything that is light lighter to give that distinct difference between them, and decreasing contrast is going to do the opposite. An interesting side effect of increasing contrast is that it also increases saturation and gives you more vivid colors. It really largely affects midtones.

If you are following the work flow I've described thus far (exposing for the highlights when you take the shot and then pushing your shadows and highlights in Lightroom), you've already put a lot of contrast in your photo. But you can always add more!

Go ahead and move your **Contrast slider** to +17 pump up the contrast.



Now you can see that in doing this, it has made the image darker, and this is a bit too much, so I will go ahead and double click on the **Exposure slider** to reset it to 0 and voila! It's starting to look good!



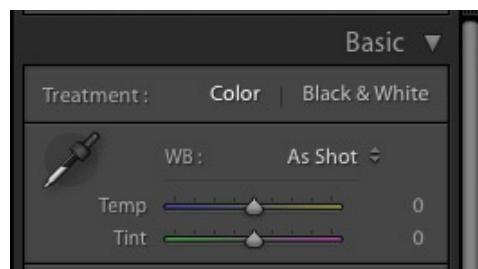
These are the majority of the basic adjustments, we'll get into the remaining ones in a moment , but look at how this photo has come with just Shadows, Highlights, Whites, Blacks, Exposure and Contrast! And if you are following

along on your computer go ahead and look at the photo in the Before/After View.

## Setting White Balance and Color Temperature

Next you have **White Balance**. What is White Balance you ask? In it's simplicity, White Balance is the way the camera is going to interpret the color of the light. Camera sensors don't see like the human eye does and computers don't process light information the way the brain does. So we have to tell the computer what type of light the camera was seeing so it knows how to interpret the color of light.

When the sun is high up in the sky the light is very blue and when it is low in the sky like at sunset it is much warmer, and you can see that Lightroom sliders reflect that on **Temp** (short for color temperature) where you can tell the light to be cooler or warmer.



Look at what happens to the image when I move that slider either cooler or warmer.



You can visit my youtube channel or blog for a more detailed explanation of all this, but just remember that when you are setting white balance and color temperature you can either take the approach that you want to match the color exactly how it was, or you want to interpret it creatively to achieve an artistic effect. I almost always go for the artistic effect rather than reproduce how it was naturally.

Now here is a very cool thing about shooting RAW with your camera: Color temperature is not baked in. You can change your White Balance and Color Temp whenever and however you want through three main tools: **White Balance Presets**, **Temp Slider** and **Tint Slider**.

You've already seen what the **Temp Slider** does, the **Tint Slider** pushes it to green or magenta.



And last but not least is the **White Balance presets** that you can choose from the drop down menu.



## White Balance Presets

Each of the presets is going to give you a different look because they will deal with the light differently. Let's rapidly have a look at these.

**As Shot** is going to leave the white balance at however it was set on your camera when you took it.

**Auto** is going to let the computer take a guess at what the white balance should be for the image.



**Daylight** is when the sun is up and it's a classic white balance to match average daylight shooting.



**Cloudy** is for cloudy skies and is going to be warmer than daylight.



**Shade** is when you are shooting subjects that are primarily in the shade and this is going to be even warmer.



**Tungsten** is going to be very blue and is useful for when you are shooting city lights or inside a house with tungsten lighting, but it tends to be blue.



**Fluorescent** is for dominant fluorescent lighting conditions such as office spaces, hospitals and so on.



**Flash** is for when you are shooting with a flash which tends to have a very white light.



**Custom** allows you to do whatever white balance you want for your image, and this is the one that I am going to be using on this photo.



## How to Set White Balance With the Color Selector

Start by using the **White Balance Color Selector (M)** and find a part of your

image that has a neutral color close to white or gray. In this image, the sand was pretty neutral.



It's going to use that sand as the determining point for how the white should be treated in this scene, and as you can see, the image has had a lot of blue added to it.



Now while this is a fairly accurate representation of how the color looked at the

time that I shot it, it is not the artistic look that I am going for and really in my mind's eye, it was much warmer than this.

So having reviewed all my options I'm going to choose **Shade** as my white balance to get that warm look.



And that's good but I'm creatively going to push it a bit more. How? By giving that **Tint slider** a little push to add **magenta**. And if you know me, you know I love my magenta. I know it's not everybody's thing, but it works for me and helps just add that touch of color.



And this is all just to your taste and the stylistic effect you are going for. There are types of photos that you want to be pretty accurate on like Interior Photography, but even those can be stylized quite a bit depending on the client. If you look at the White Balance of the photo **As Shot** and compare it to what we have, you will see it isn't that far off, but I've added some warmth and some magenta which I feel makes for a more aesthetically pleasing photo.

Alright that's White Balance. Now let's look at those final three sliders in the Basic Panel!

### Adjusting Your Overall Saturation Levels

The next stage in the work flow is to get your global saturation levels dialed in using the sliders found in the **Presence** area of the **Basic panel**. Namely **Clarity**, **Vibrance** and **Saturation**. All three of these are going to help your images pop or soften using the amount of color present in your image as well as how defined they are edge to edge.

#### What is Clarity and How to Adjust It

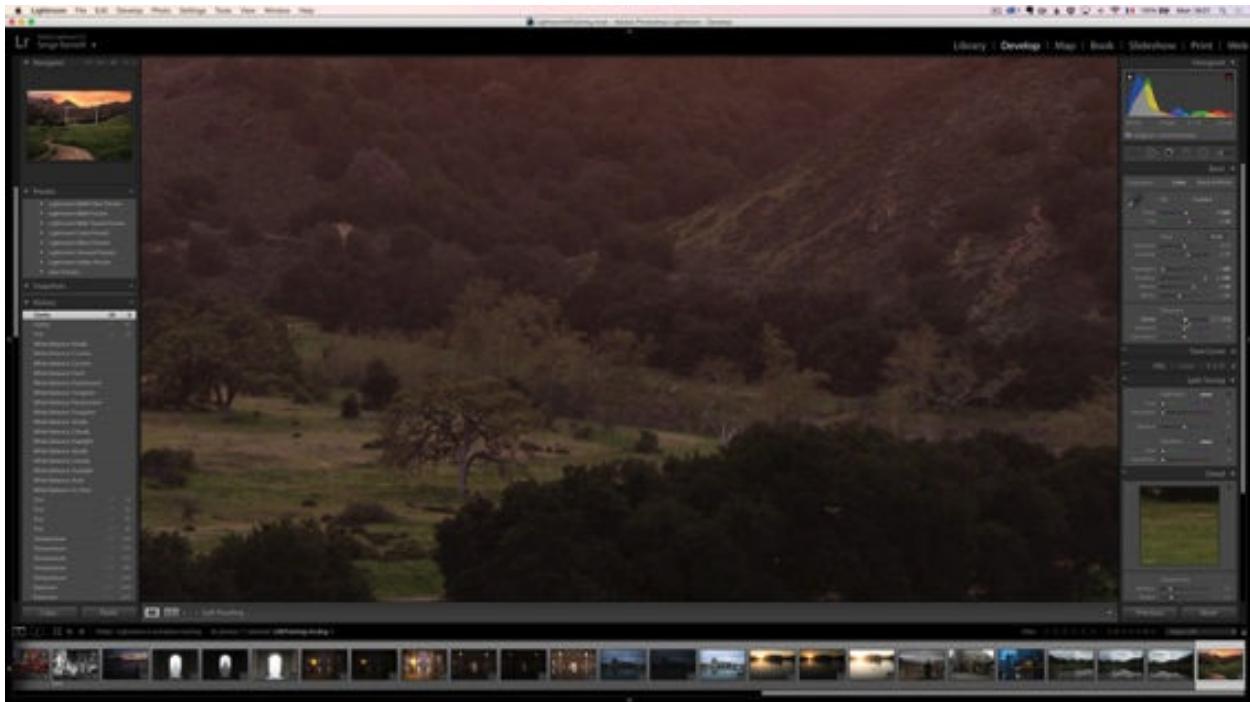
The **Clarity** slider controls local contrast to help make edges more defined or less defined. You can see in these first images how it looks overall with no clarity applied:



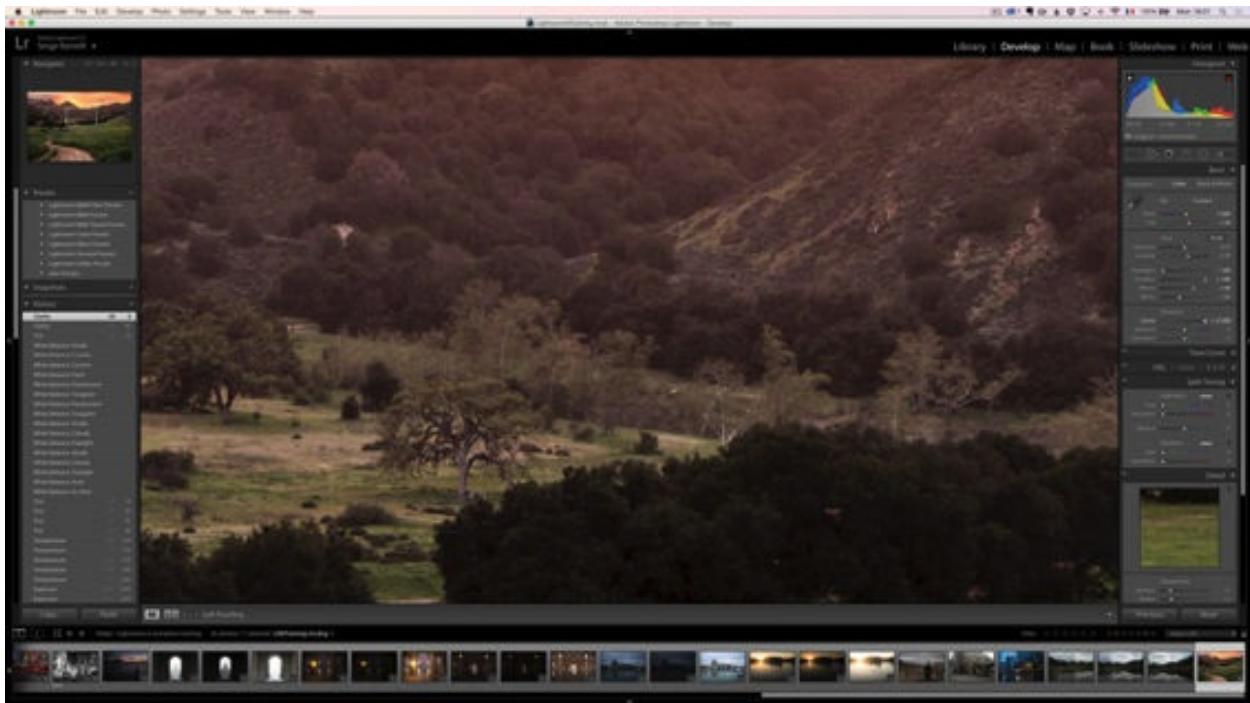
And then with more **Clarity** applied and how those midtones get sharper:



I hope you are following along with the RAW file so that you can really see this, but in case you aren't have a look at the zoomed in photo on the mountain area without **Clarity**:



And then with **Clarity**:



It's really increasing or removing contrast in the gray area or midtones of the photo. Try to stay away from globally just lumping a bunch of **Clarity** on your images. Sometimes you can achieve interesting affects, like when I bottom the **Clarity** to -100 and I get that fuzzy sky, hazy sunset look:



But there are better ways to do this so you don't lose details in the rest of your photo as well. I advise using the **Brush tools** to apply localized use of **Clarity** and we'll cover that in the project chapters ahead.

That being said, on photos where I have done the +100/-100 on my **Shadows** and **Highlights**, it can give the photo a slightly HDR'y or illustrative type look. And setting the **Clarity** at around -10 helps me get a more natural look in my photos to get rid of that HDR'y problem. (HDR is short for High Dynamic Range and is a technique of photography that combines multiple images of different exposures to get much more image information into one photo.)



That's **Clarity**, moving on!

### The Difference Between Vibrance and Saturation

**Vibrance** and **Saturation** are very intertwined, and yet they both play with the same color information a little differently.

Pushing up **Vibrance** works to increase image saturation while also avoiding clipping colors as they approach full saturation, meaning that it will boost the saturation of all lower-saturated colors while not pushing too hard on the colors that are already very saturated.

**Saturation** adjusts all colors equally from -100 where you have black and white to +100 where you have effectively doubled your saturation levels. All the reds are more vivid, all the greens are more vivid and so on. In other words it doesn't apply less saturation to colors that are already saturated, it just pours on the color globally.

### Using the Saturation Slider

Have a look at the image how it is right now. Now if we push the Saturation slider to the right watch how the colors all become more vivid:



This is crazy unnatural, and while there are a lot of people who really like that hyperstylized look, but this is over the top for me.

Now if I move the **Saturation slider** to the left, it takes out the color and desaturates the image:



Now let's look at how **Vibrance** handles this task.

## Using the Vibrance Slider

Have a look again at the image above as it was made with putting the Saturation slider all the way up.

Now go ahead and double click on the slider to reset your **Saturation** to 0.

Now pushing up **Vibrance** you will see that it does start making the colors unnatural, but it isn't as extreme as Saturation. It detects which colors are lacking saturation and prioritizes those without pushing too hard the ones which are already reaching maximum saturation.



You will see that unlike **Saturation**, when you put **Vibrance** at -100 you don't get black and white because of how Vibrance handles color, but still it's an interesting look and a lot of fashion photographers use tricks with Vibrance and Saturation to get stylized looks.



There is still a lot more you can do with color saturation in specific ranges of colors in the **HSL/Color/B&W panel**, but we'll get to that later. For now let's finish this photo.

Remember it's always up to you and your taste on the artistic effect you want to achieve. In this photo I like how it looks with the **Saturation** left at 0 but with the **Vibrance** moved up to +22.



And there you have it. That's the **Basic panel** and what each of the slider controls in it adjust. Let's talk about the **Tone Curve panel** next.

## Using the Tone Curve Panel

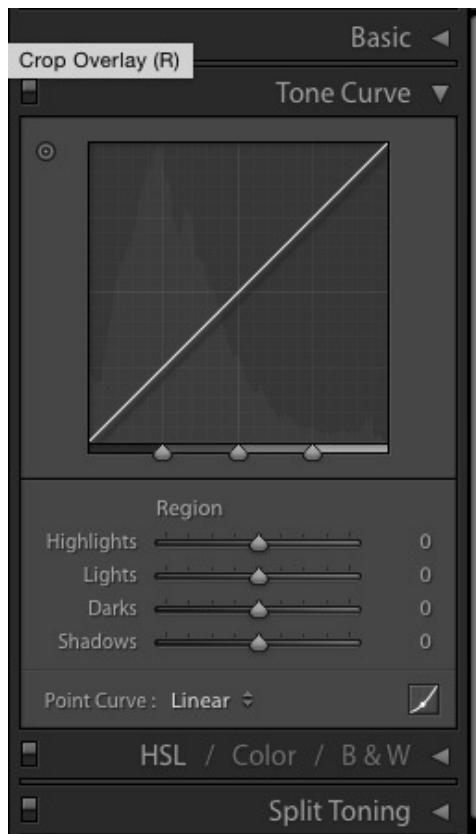
The Tone Curve is another color correction tool that allows you to adjust different tonal values in the image and it uses a graph with a line to visually represent the color/tonal values of your image. They are referred to as curves because of the shape of the graph line which you curve to manipulate the image.

It used to be the major tool in the earlier versions of Lightroom when you didn't have all those nifty little sliders in the **Basic panel** to shazam your image into shape.

There are still some photographers who do all of their major adjustments just using curves and swear by this method. But for my photography, I find that I get better results faster using the **Basic panel** and I will do minor tweaks as needed using the **Tone Curve tools** so I don't really end up using this panel much. But I will show you all the different parts of it so you know what it does.

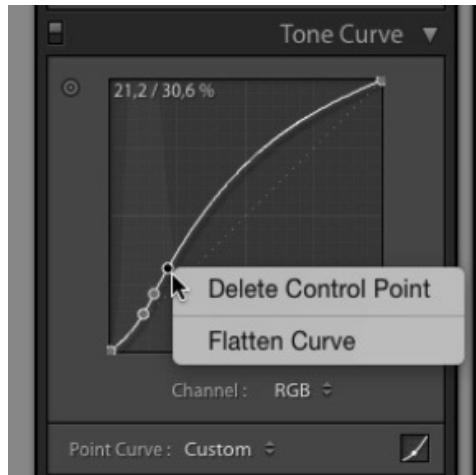
### The Tone Curve Graph

If you look at the **Tone Curve panel** you will see a graph with a straight line and a gray mountain range behind it. This graph and how the line is manipulated represent changes made to the tonal scale of a photo.



Tip: In the upper left corner there is a small light switch looking thing which can turn the Tone Curve off or on.

Tip: Right clicking at any point on the line will allow you to add or delete Control Points or delete all control points to create a flat curve.



Here is how Adobe describes it: “The horizontal axis represents the original tone values (input values), with black on the left and progressively lighter values toward the right. The vertical axis represents the changed tone values (output values), with black on the bottom and lighter values progressing to white at the

top. Use the tone curve to tweak the adjustments you make to a photo in the Basic panel.”

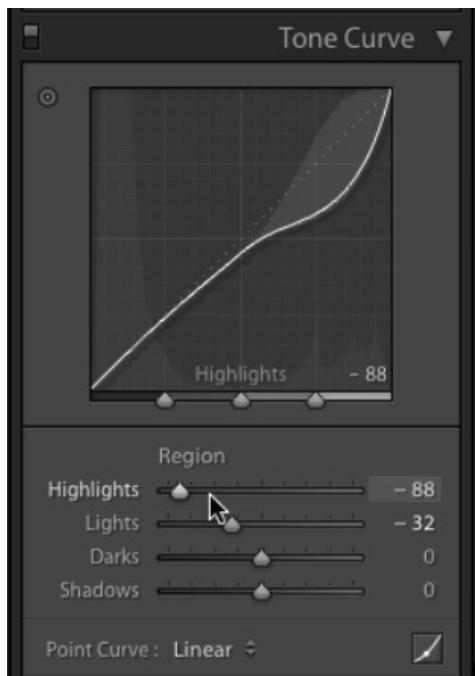
Let’s walk through this step by step because it definitely isn’t as simple as manipulating sliders.

### Using the Tone Curve Panel

Go ahead and reset your **Highlights**, **Whites**, **Shadows**, **Blacks** and **Exposure** in the **Basic panel**.

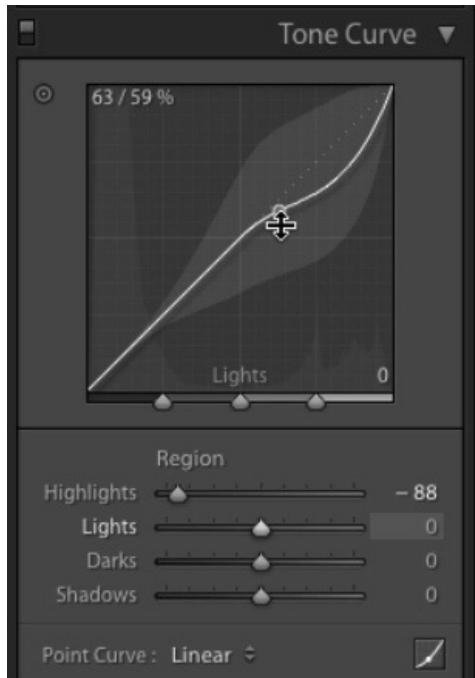


If you look under the graph you will see that you have sliders for your **Highlights**, **Lights**, **Darks** and **Shadows**. You can move the sliders to adjust those tonal ranges.



Also by moving those three small pointers at the bottom of the graph you will adjust which part of the graph the sliders are manipulating.

You can also directly manipulate the curve by clicking and dragging at any point on it:



Also below the sliders you have some **Point Curve** presets you can apply from a drop down menu that will apply an overall adjustment to the image with three

options, **Linear**, **Medium** or **Strong Contrast**.

**Linear** is what we've already been working in:



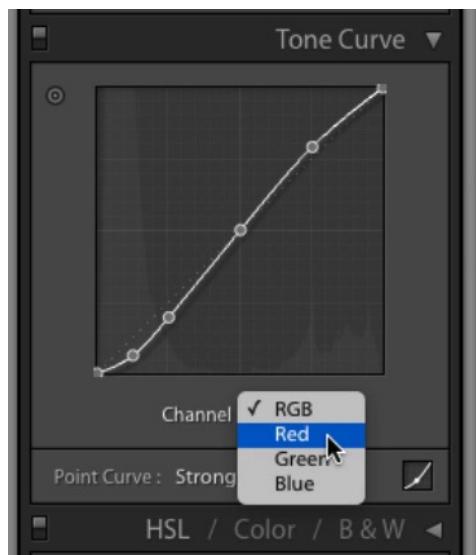
**Medium Contrast** you can see here:

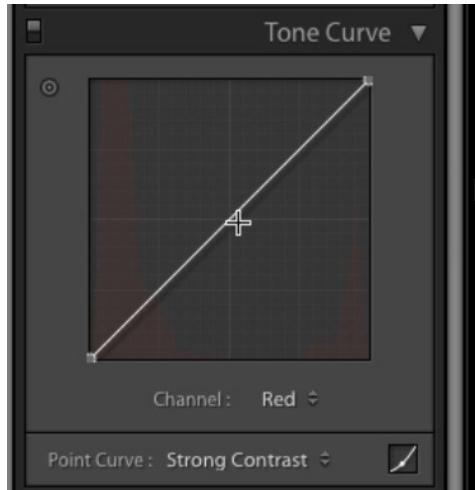


And **Strong Contrast** you can see here:



If you look at the graph you will see each one affects the curve differently. You can also selectively manipulate each one of the color channels (red, green, blue). Right now we are on RGB but by selecting Red from the Channel drop down you would be adjusting the curve just on that color channel.





Now if you push the Red curve up in the midtones area you will be putting a bunch more red into your image:



You could do this for any one of the three color channels. For me, I usually do this work down in the **HSL/Color/B&W Panel**.

### Tweaking the Image Using the Tone Curve Panel

Okay I'm going to use the **Basic panel** sliders now to get the image back to how I had it before we started monkeying with the curves.



Now we could use the curves to add a touch of red to it:



Or some green:



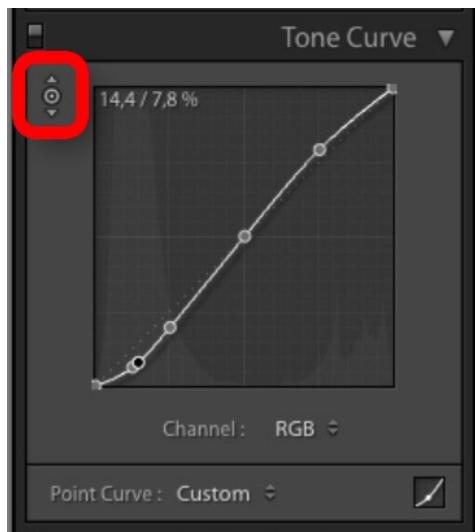
It might be tough to see the subtleties of the changes in the e-book, but looking at the RAW files on your screen will make it very apparent.

Curves are very helpful for people who have been color correcting and retouching in Photoshop for years so they don't get lost with the Lightroom sliders, but once you understand the basics of what you are trying to manipulate (Blacks, Shadows, Midtones, Highlights, Whites and Color Channels), with a little bit of tinkering on any tool you can get the hang of it quickly.

But for most people, I'm pretty sure that the simplicity of the Basic panel is going to be much more appealing. But there is a very cool recent addition to the **Tone Curve panel** which is worth showing you.

### The Tone Curve Targeted Adjustment Tool

In the upper left corner of the **Tone Curve panel** you will see a circle in between two triangles.



Clicking on this and then clicking on an area in your photo will allow you to selectively adjust those values which can be pretty helpful. Let's reset our photo and curves again so you can see how this works.

Now go ahead and select an area of the sky with the **Targeted adjustment tool** and drag it down and watch how it affects everything and brings the highlights down so we can see more details.



And now click on a dark area of the hills and drag it up to reveal details in the shadows.



And go ahead and now click on the grass and drag that up and you'll see it's starting to look pretty good.



You can also see that the line is curving in the graph to represent the changes you are making.

That's a pretty cool feature if you ask me. And that's **Curves**. All that being

said, these days with the precise control I get from the sliders, I do almost all my big work in the **Basic panel** and then just do small tweaks with **Curves**.

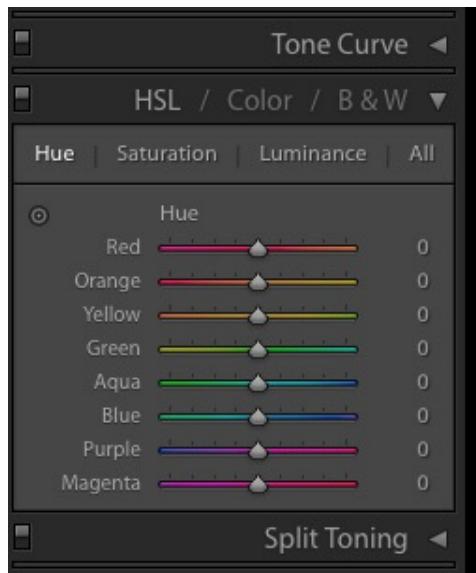
## Using the HSL, Color and B&W Panel

The next panel down is the **HSL/Color/B&W panel**. This panel is where you can do all the fine tweaking on your photo's colors. **HSL** and **Color** really are two slightly different ways of doing the same thing and the **Black & White** option gives you some incredible ways to manipulate color images that you are making black and white.

HSL is short for Hue, Saturation, Luminance.

### Using the Hue Sliders

The word hue is just another way of saying color. The **Hue subpanel** allow you to manipulate your colors so that you can change them from one color to another by adjusting the sliders.



You basically use these sliders to get the color to where it pleases you. At first it can feel a bit weird to change one color to another by shifting the hue sliders, but you'll get the hang of it. (Note: Adobe designed it so that sliding left means going counterclockwise on a color wheel, and sliding right is clockwise.)

In this photo I've gone ahead and tweaked my **Red**, **Orange**, **Yellow** and **Green** sliders and left the rest alone.



As a word of caution, I have found that pushing the sliders more than 30 +/- (or maximum 40) can lead to creating some heavy artifacts in photos when they are printed or displayed at 100%. It can be an ugly surprise. So use these controls with a gentle hand, a little really does go a long way.

### The Hue Targeted Adjustment Tool

Just like in the Tone Curve panel you will see a circle in between two triangles for the **Targeted Adjustment tool**. Using this tool and click/dragging on an area in your photo will allow you to selectively adjust those color hues. As you can see, with me dragging on the grass it really pumps up the green.



However this is outside the safe zone because it's way above +40 and remember we want to stay under +30/-30 to ensure we don't get artifacting. So go ahead and bring that back down into range by dragging down with the tool or using the sliders.

### Using the Saturation Sliders

We remember what saturation means right? It's just the amount of color present, if you think about putting more color ink on something to saturate it, that might help you remember the concept. But adjusting saturation is easy. Go ahead and click on the **Saturation subpanel** and you will see all the same sliders but instead of changing hue, they go from full color to black and white.



So now if you move the **Red slider** to the right, anything that is red is going to get more saturated.



And if you move it to the left anything that is red is going to get desaturated.



If you look in the haze of the hills you can really see that working.

And just to make it painfully obvious in case the photo in the book are making it difficult to see, let's do the same with the **Orange slider**.





All of that is far beyond the what I'd really do with it, so let's go ahead and do some gentle adjustments to the reds, yellows, oranges and greens until we get a nice photo. Try putting the **Red** at 0, **Orange** to +10, **Yellow** at +29, and **Green** at +25.

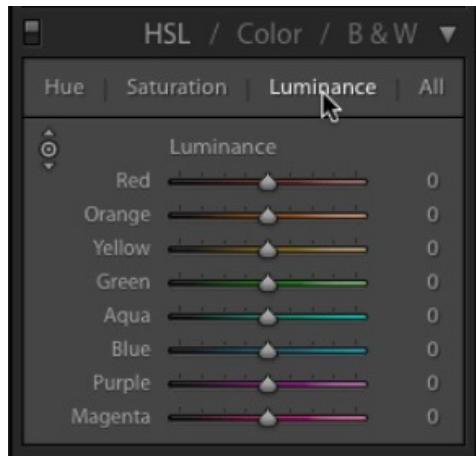


## The Saturation Targeted Adjustment Tool

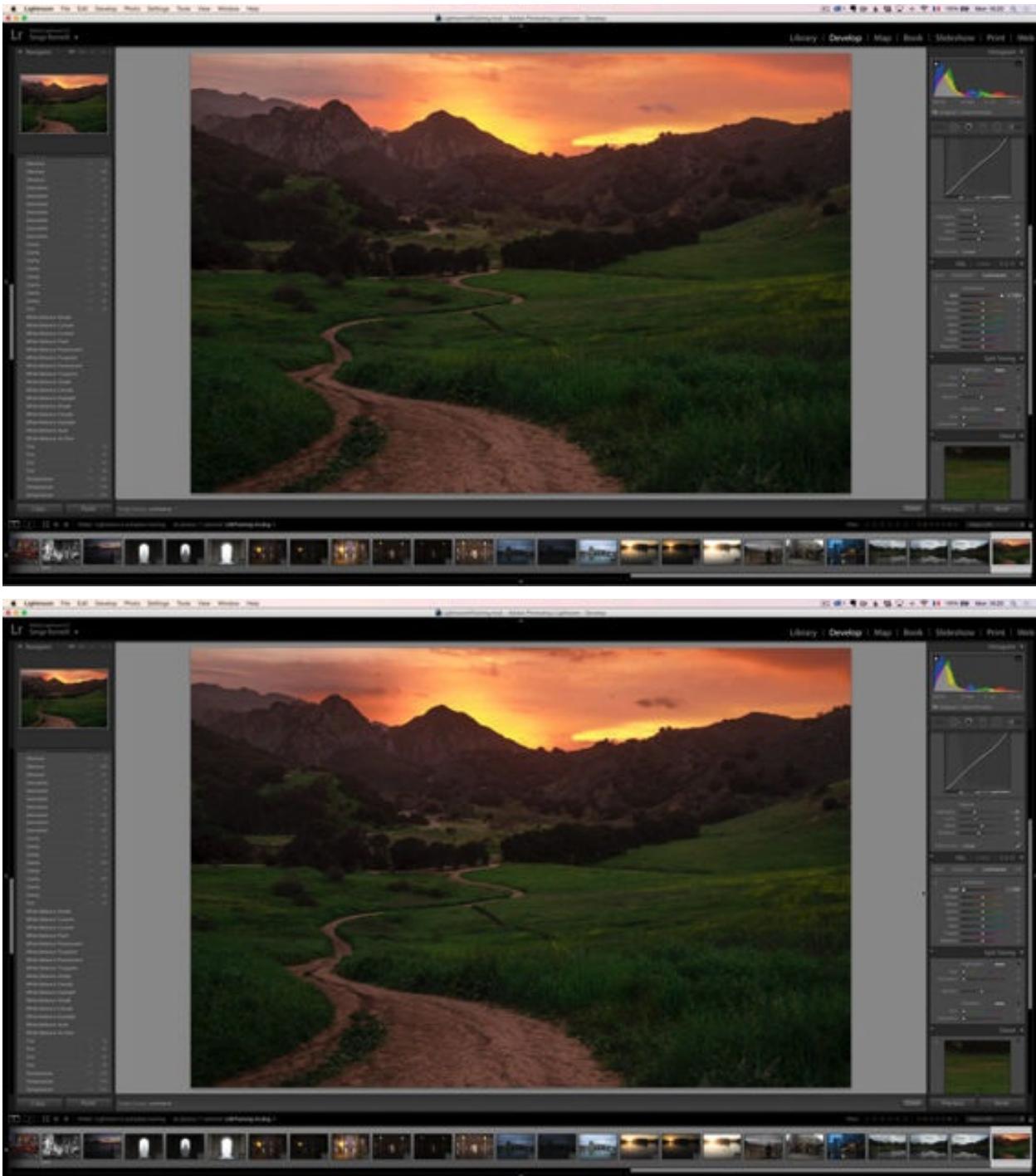
The Saturation subpanel also has a **Targeted Adjustment tool** in the upper left hand corner and I believe that by now you understand how this works. With this tool selected, click and drag on any area of the photo to manipulate the saturation levels of that color range.

### Using the Luminance Sliders

Luminance is basically just how bright or dark a color is. And Lightroom has a **Luminance subpanel** with similar looking sliders as the **Saturation subpanel** for the same colors but now you are controlling their **Luminance**.



I'm going to go ahead and put the **Red slider** up to +100 and then down to -100 so you can see what this does in brightening and darkening the red colors:

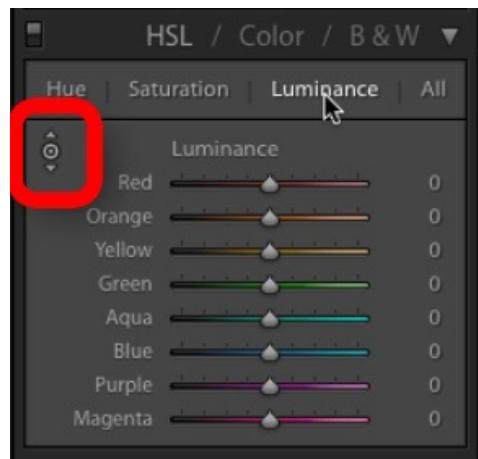


And I'll do the same thing for the **Orange** colors. One thing to keep in mind is that when you darken colors you are automatically increasing saturation at the same time, so ensure you don't go overboard on this.



## The Luminance Targeted Adjustment Tool

This works exactly as described in **Hue** and **Saturation**. Select the tool, click on an area in your photo and drag up or down to increase or decrease the luminance of the colors you've selected. It's circled in red here for reference:



## Final Hue/Saturation/Luminance Adjustments

Alright so now just playing around with my **Luminance Sliders** and the **Targeted** tool I've adjusted the luminance to bring out subtle details in my sunset and that's good enough for now.

Have a look at the image before we started tinkering with Hue, Saturation and Luminance and after.





The final tweaks in the grass and the path I will have to do with brushes in the **Toolbar** which I will show you in a later section.

### Using the All Subpanel

You will see an **All** option at the top and clicking on that will put your **Hue**, **Saturation** and **Luminance** sliders that we've talked about in the last 3 sections all on display at the same time for you to adjust.



Remember that Hue shifts your color like moving your reds to orange or blues to green.

Saturation makes the colors more or less vivid.

And Luminance makes the colors brighter or darker.

## Using the Color Panel

The **Color Panel** basically allows you to do everything you just did but with a different layout. This is Adobe empowering photographers with different work flows and really allowing everyone to have their cake and eat it too. But don't try and eat your computer, not too tasty.

Go ahead and select **Red**:



If you look you will notice that the Hue, Saturation and Luminance values that you set in the **HSL Panel** have carried over.

Same with **Orange**:



So in a nutshell, the **Color Panel** gives you a different layout than the **HSL Panel** to achieve the same results. Use whichever one allows you to get the photo you want faster.

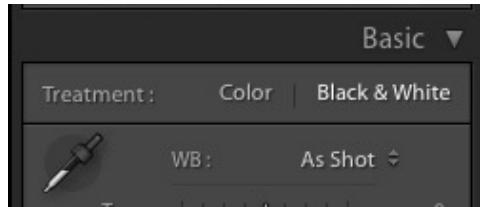
## Using the B&W Panel and Split Toning Panel

Alright let's briefly talk about **Black and White**. The first thing you need to know is that retouching Black and White is an art form all by itself and in the Projects section of this book I will do my best to get you up and running on this. Here I just want to briefly touch upon the **B & W panel** and **Split Toning panels** to give you a basic understanding of what they do.

What Does the B & W Panel Do?

In terms of actual workflow normally you should do the basic tonal adjustments to the photo getting your highlights, shadows, whites, blacks and then go to the **B & W panel**.

To start, go to the **Color panel** and on Treatment select **Black & White**.

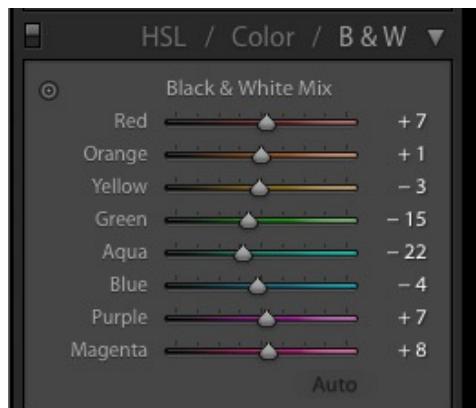


Or you can use the keyboard shortcut ([V](#)). This will convert your image to Grayscale. (Grayscale refers to an image that has no color present so all values are varying shades of white and black, and therefore in different positions on a scale of gray.)



In this panel you will see that it has all the same color sliders that the **HSL** and **Color** panels had. The **B & W** panel will allow you to tell Lightroom how to deal with the conversion of the color values to grayscale and darken or lighten them as gray tones instead of color.

Clicking on **Auto** essentially lets Lightroom maximize the distribution of color information across the grayscale tones and is usually a really good starting point.



## The B&W Targeted Adjustment Tool

You once again have the **Targeted adjustment tool** in this panel, and selecting on an area of your photo and click dragging up or down will allow you to lighten or darken those tones. Here I am clicking and dragging to lighten the road, but as you can see it also affects the sky.



## Using the Split Toning Panel

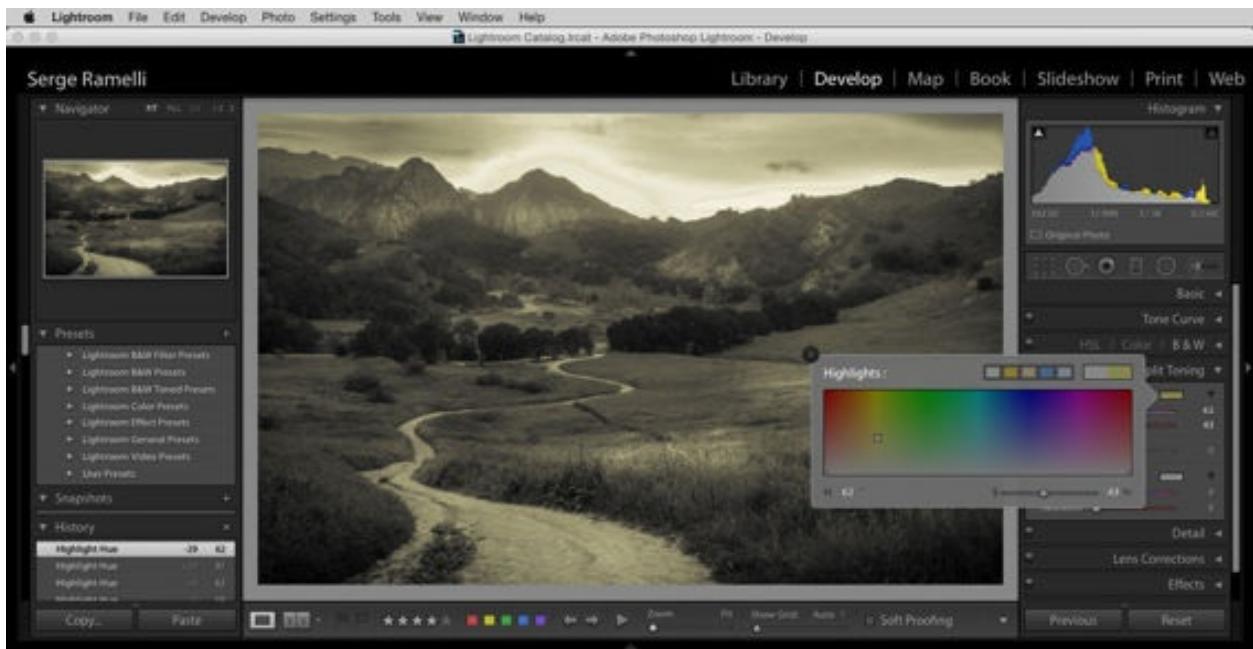
Split Toning is a throwback to the days of film photography when photographers would take their black and white photos and tint the highlights one color and the shadows another color, often warmer in highlights and cooler in shadows. While its primary use is black and white images, many people use it to achieve interesting effects on color images as well. For now we are just going to use it on

black & white.

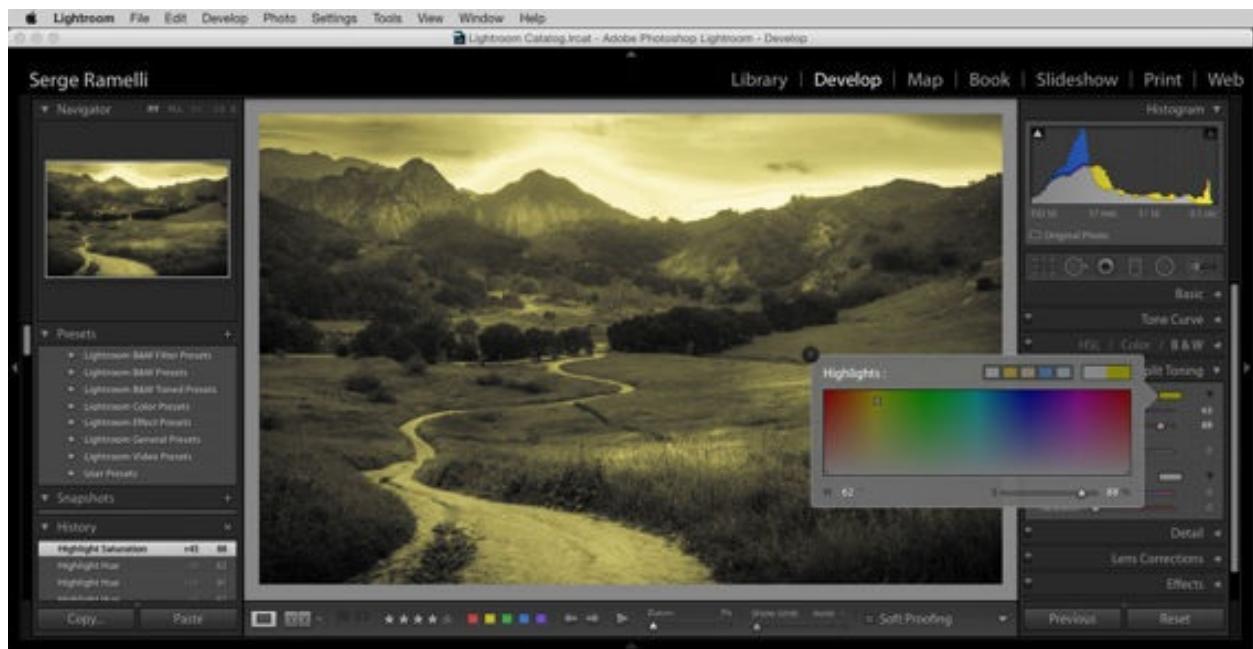
Look over the **Split Toning** panel and the first option is the **Highlights**:



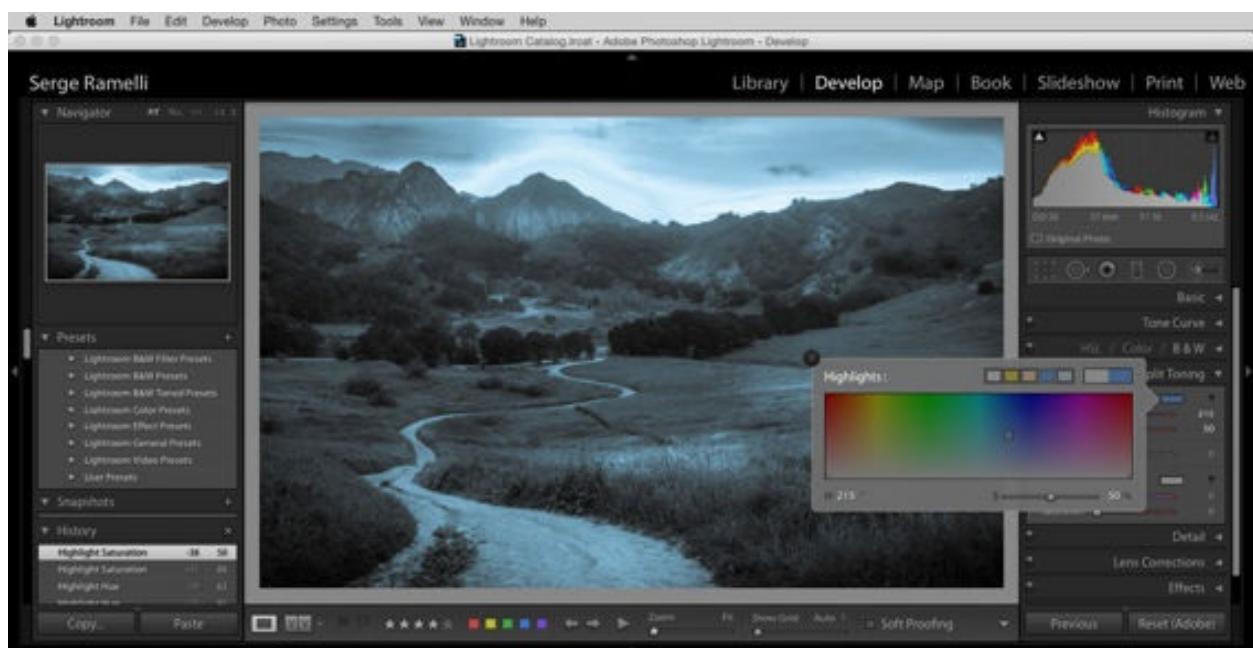
You choose a color for the highlights by either using the **Hue** and **Saturation** sliders to get the look you want or by clicking on the color square and opening the color preset panel and picking a color:



This color picker has the hue values going left to right and saturation values going up and down. You will see the **H** (for Hue) and **S** (for Saturation) at the bottom changed to reflect your pick. You can also choose to increase the saturation with the slider at the bottom. Play around with this for a moment and you'll see how it works.



Clicking on the squares at the top, such as the blue one, applies that preset color to the highlights.



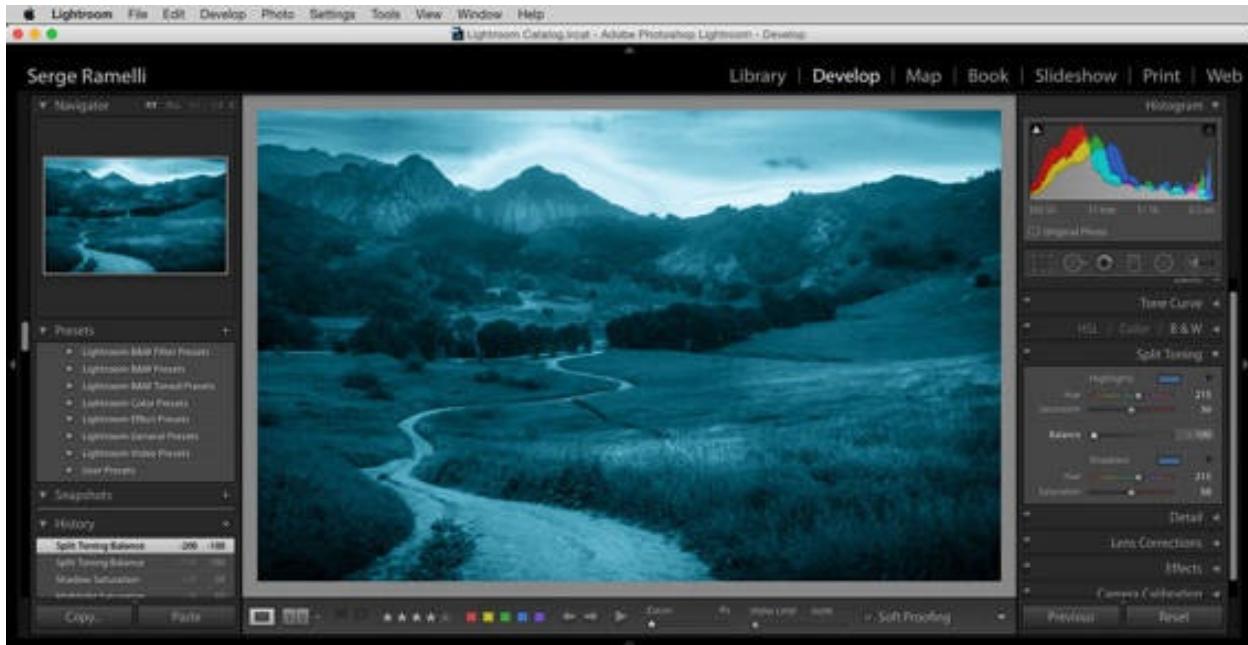
It works the same when you select the color square from the **Shadows** option as well.



Set the **Balance slider** to balance the effect between the **Highlight** and **Shadow** sliders. Positive values increase the effect of the **Highlight** sliders:



Negative values increase the effect of the **Shadow** sliders:



These adjustments are being made very over the top so that you can see how the parts of the **Split Toning panel** work. I strongly suggest you study the black and white projects later in this book for a more in depth walk through on their use.

## Using the Detail Panel

The **Detail panel** is very interesting because it deals with sharpness and noise.

What is Noise?

In the electronics world there are a number of definitions for noise, but in digital photography it is unwanted visual distortion. If you've looked at film photographs, it looks similar to film grain, but in the digital realm it looks kind of like rainbow or splotchy speckles and can make a photo unusable. It really rears its ugly head when shooting with insufficient light and when you have to crank up the ISO on your camera.

Let's look at our Malibu State Park image, go ahead and press **(I)** on your keyboard to pull up the photo information. You will see that I shot this photo at ISO 50, which is as low as my camera goes to keep noise low.