

COMPLETE DIGITAL PHOTO COURSE

RAW SKILLS FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

YOUR FULL GUIDE TO ULTIMATE IMAGE QUALITY



24
pages of
RAW skills
& advice



**5 EASY
PROJECTS**

to improve
your skills!

**IN-DEPTH
GUIDE**

To the Camera
Raw interface



FREE DIGIMAG WITH
THE NOVEMBER
2013 ISSUE OF

**Practical
Photography**

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RAW LETS YOU MAKE CHANGES TO AN IMAGE THAT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE WITH A JPEG!



WELCOME

IF YOU WANT THE ULTIMATE IN IMAGE QUALITY, YOU NEED TO BE USING RAW. FORTUNATELY IT'S EASY TO DO. FIND OUT HOW...

MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT using RAW gives you improved image quality and while this is true, the form it comes in can be a little confusing. Shooting in RAW doesn't give you more pixels to play with or extra sharpness in your pictures, it's actually much more about flexibility and the ability to control results.

All pictures start out as RAW data, but most of the time this is compressed into a JPEG before it's output. In this compression, some of the data is discarded and it's then fixed, but when you open a RAW file into Photoshop, all the original pure data is still there for you to use, meaning you can make a host of changes to your picture that wouldn't be as successful with a JPEG.

Say, for instance, one part of the picture is too bright, like the sky. In a JPEG, nothing can be done because the detail has been lost, but in a RAW file it can be brought back using the Exposure slider. The same applies to returning shadow details, increasing the intensity of colour and controlling a picture's white balance for more accurate hues. But it doesn't end there, you

can apply creative effects by the dozen too. Just turn the page to start learning.

Software key

- Ps** These techniques work in Photoshop & Elements. Look out for these icons and you can see at a glance which software you can use.
- Pse**

GET STARTED WITH RAW



THE CAMERA RAW CONVERTER IS YOUR PATH TO BETTER IMAGES AND YOU CAN FIND OUT WHAT MAKES IT TICK RIGHT HERE

Once you open a RAW into Photoshop or Elements the Adobe Camera Raw interface will launch and, while to newcomers it may seem complicated, it's really just like an oversized Photoshop palette. Many of the tools involved will also be familiar to Photoshop or Elements users, so you'll soon feel right at home with the interface and ready to get working.

The tools you need

Over the next few pages we'll take a look at the most useful tools and controls in the Camera Raw interface and tell you what they do when applied to your pics. We'll then make a basic RAW conversion. The screen on the right is from Elements 9, so you may spot some differences if you're running a different copy of Elements or a version of its big brother, the Photoshop CS series. Differences will be minor though, because here we're looking at the basic tools. Take a quick look around to familiarise yourself with them, then turn over to start using them in action - it's easier than you think!



THE TOOLBAR
You'll recognise many of these tools from the main image-editing area of Photoshop or Elements, and they're mainly used to navigate around the image, crop, straighten or rotate it.

IMAGE HISTOGRAM
This chart shows how the tonal values are distributed throughout the image you're working on and responds to changes you make using the sliders below. The luminance value runs from left to right, so you can tell if a picture is heavy on the shadows (chart to the left) or the highlights (to the right). You can also activate the **SHADOWS & HIGHLIGHTS CLIPPING WARNINGS** here, which overlay a warning on the image - areas of red showing where highlights are clipped into pure white and have lost detail, and blue meaning detail has been lost in shadow.

FILE INFO & TABS
Under the Histogram you'll find info about how your photo was shot and below that are the Tabs, in this version: *Basic* (which is currently open), *Detail* and *Camera Calibration*.

FLY-OUT MENU
Here you'll find options to reset the Camera Raw Defaults, taking you back to an unedited starting point.

WHITE BALANCE & TEMPERATURE
The drop-down **WHITE BALANCE** list has preset options (*Tungsten, Daylight, Cloudy* etc) like those on your camera. These can be fine-tuned by the **TEMPERATURE** slider letting you warm up or cool down colours in relation to the ambient light in which it was shot. The **TINT** slider compensates for any green or magenta colour cast.

EXPOSURE, RECOVERY, FILL LIGHT & BLACKS
The **EXPOSURE** slider adjusts overall image brightness, and is biased towards the highlights. Decreasing it will darken your pic and increasing it will make it brighter. **RECOVERY** is used to restore detail in highlight areas and **FILL LIGHT** recovers detail from the shadow areas, but avoids brightening the very deepest blacks. Finally **BLACKS** lets you darken (or lighten) the very lowest part of the tonal range; the shadows of the image.

BRIGHTNESS, CONTRAST & CLARITY
The **BRIGHTNESS** slider lightens or darkens all of the tones in your image within the set black and white points, while **CONTRAST** makes the mid-to-light tones brighter and the mid-to-dark tones darker, creating separation and depth. The **CLARITY** slider adds definition by increasing the contrast around edges within your photo, but can cause haloes if it's used too aggressively.

VIBRANCE & SATURATION
VIBRANCE adjusts the intensity of the least-saturated colours in the picture and has less effect on the more-saturated ones, which helps you avoid blocking out colours, while **SATURATION** controls all the colours equally, so should be used sparingly.

HELP & SAVE
The **HELP** button launches the Adobe Community Help page, while **SAVE IMAGE...** lets you save the converted RAW file without opening it. This is really useful when making batch conversions - converting multiple RAWs using the same settings.

DEPTH
This lets you set the resulting bit-depth of your converted file for increased quality, though it's best left on 8-bits per channel unless you really want or need 16-bit images (many functions in Photoshop can't be used on them).

DONE, CANCEL & OPEN IMAGE
The final buttons you'll use in the Camera Raw interface. **DONE** closes the image while retaining any settings you've changed. **CANCEL** closes the image *without* recording changes and **OPEN IMAGE** will take the picture in the full image-editing area of Photoshop or Elements for further work.

TURN OVER TO SEE CAMERA RAW IN ACTION

HOW TO MAKE A BASIC RAW CONVERSION

Now we've taken a look at the Camera Raw interface it's time to get stuck into a proper RAW conversion. So just load up the RAW file you'd like to work on and give it a try. By following this guide you'll learn all about the tools you really need, and discover that RAW is the way to go if you want great pictures.

The pic we'll be using has various problems, all of which are common to many landscape shots and other images. For instance its colours are a little too cold, so it could do with warming up, and this is easy to achieve using the White

Balance tool, menu or Temperature slider. But the biggest problem - and by association the greatest benefit of using RAW - is that we need to correct the exposure. Shot towards the sun, the sky is much too bright, and you can plainly see this as soon as you open the file by clicking on the Highlight clipping warning button.

Any areas which are pure white will carry a red overlay and you'll clearly be able to see that the top left of the picture is very burnt out with no cloud detail remaining. With a JPEG, nothing could be done

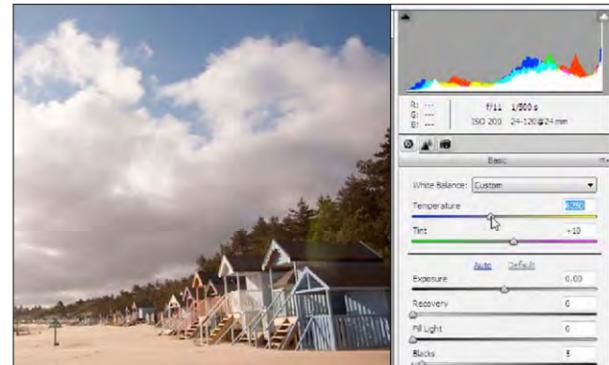


- the detail would have been lost for good, but in a RAW file it can be brought back using the Exposure and Recovery sliders. Remember, though, that there's no 'correct'

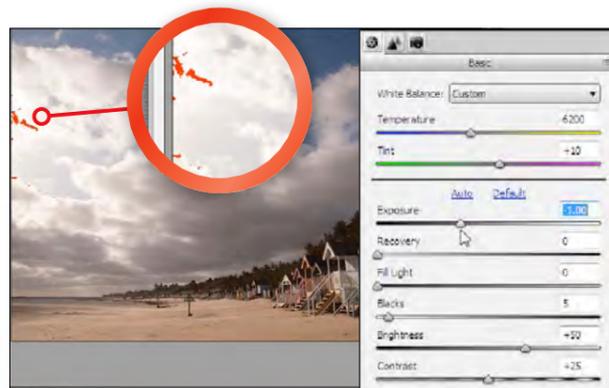
recipe for a RAW conversion - but get used to what the sliders do and you'll be well equipped to make your own. Follow this step-by-step to get started...



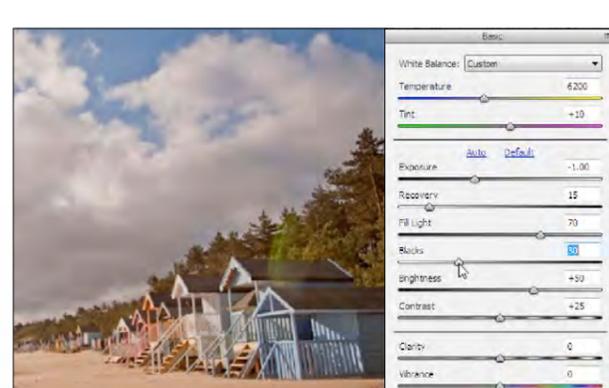
1 START OPEN & CROP THE IMAGE. In Photoshop or Elements, go to *File* → *Open* and select your RAW image. Click *Open* and the Camera Raw interface will launch. Now click on the *Straighten* tool and drag it out along the horizon to match the angle. Release the button and you'll see a crop box appear, angled to correct any slant in your image. Drag the corner handles in a little, then hit *Return*.



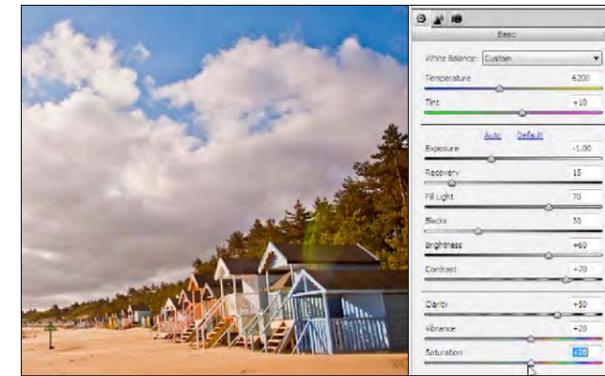
2 CORRECT THE COLOURS. As mentioned above, the picture could do with warming up. To do it, either pick the *White Balance* tool from the toolbar and click on a neutral grey tone in the image (like the grey clouds), or for a more manual control, take the *Temperature* slider and move it up or down. To make the most of the colours in our picture, we set it to 6200 with the *Tint* at +10.



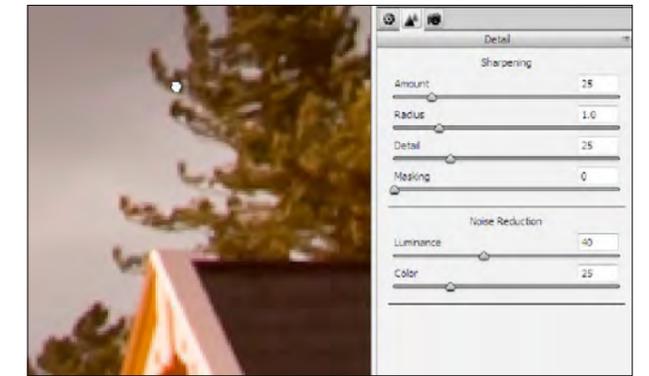
3 CONTROL THE HIGHLIGHTS. Switch on the Highlight clipping warnings next to the Histogram and you'll see lots of red in the sky showing it's burnt out. Now set the *Exposure* to -1.00 and the *Recovery* slider to 15 and most of, if not all the red warnings will disappear. If you're not keen on the clipping warnings covering your pic, you can instead hold *Alt* as you move the slider to toggle a similar effect.



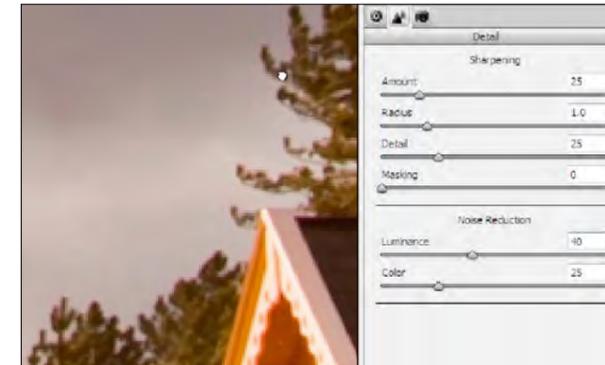
4 IMPROVE THE SHADOW AREAS. By moving the *Exposure* slider to a negative value we've darkened the sky but also the rest of the scene. To bring it back, move the *Fill Light* slider to 70, which will lighten these shadow areas, but leave them looking a little washed out. To address this, move the *Blacks* to 30, using the *Alt*-key preview to make sure they aren't too heavy in your shot.



5 ADD SOME CONTRAST. As the pic was shot into the sun, the overall contrast has taken a bit of a hit, so for a bit more punch move the *Contrast* slider to about +70. We can also lighten up the picture a little using the *Brightness* slider and setting it at +60. Next move the *Clarity* to about +50, which will add some definition to the beach huts making the picture look more detailed.



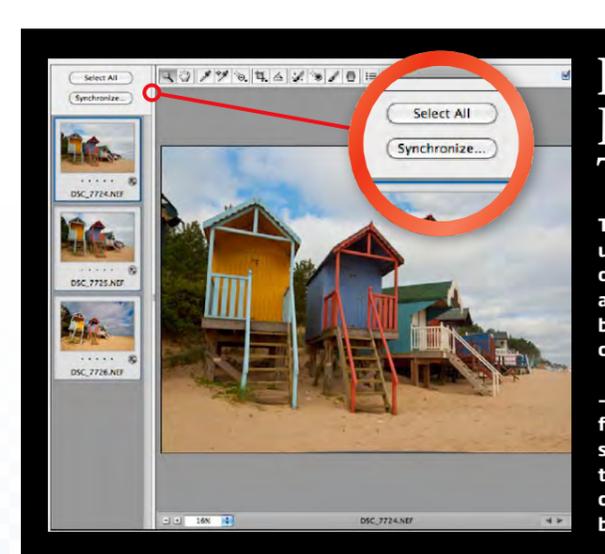
6 WORK UP THE COLOURS. There are some lovely brightly coloured beach huts in the picture, but at present their colours are a little muted. We can correct this with the *Vibrance* and *Saturation* sliders. The *Vibrance* slider works on the least-saturated colours, so first move this up to +20 to even things out, then use +20 for *Saturation*, too, making the picture more colourful overall.



7 SOFTEN THE NOISE. Click on the *Detail* tab and move down to the *Noise Reduction* sliders. Before using them, zoom in to a 100% view, so you can see the changes taking place. Now keep your eye on the sky as you move the *Luminance* slider to around 40 and you'll see the graininess much reduced. Move the *Color* slider up until any red, green or blue specs disappear - 25 works on our picture here.



8 FINISH SHARPEN THE PIC. We can also improve sharpness in RAW. First move the *Amount* (which controls the overall level of sharpening) to around 50, and the *Radius* (which governs how broad the effect is) to 1.0. Next, set the *Detail* to 30, which will keep the sharpening around edges within your pic and the *Masking* to 50, so smooth areas like the sky are omitted. Now click *Open Image*. That's it!



HOW TO CONVERT MULTIPLE RAWS AT THE SAME TIME

There's a lot of fine control which goes into a RAW conversion and to the uninitiated it can seem like too much effort, especially when you need to convert multiple shots. The benefit is plain though and if you're serious about achieving the very best images, RAW is something that just can't be beaten. There are some ways to save time however, and one of them is to convert lots of RAWs at the same time.

So long as your subject matter is pretty similar from one shot to the next - lots of pictures of the same landscape scene or multiple studio portraits for instance - you can load multiple RAWs into the converter and apply the same settings to all of them. To do it, go to *File* → *Open* and highlight all of the RAWs you want to convert. Click *Open* and once they appear in the RAW converter, click the *Select All* button. Now make your changes and they'll be applied to all of the RAWs you've loaded at once. Easy!

THE FINAL IMAGE

By using the Adobe Camera Raw converter to turn our original colour image to black & white we've been able to create this superb mono image, which is bursting with detail.



CREATE SUPERB MONO IMAGES FROM RAW

MAKE BLACK & WHITE IMAGES WITH BAGS OF GRITTY DETAIL AND DRAMATIC CONTRAST - IT'S EASY WHEN YOU GO MONO IN RAW

WORKING IN BLACK & WHITE is perhaps the quickest and most dramatic way that you can improve your images. It's a style in which it's easy to create striking shots, because without colour, an image is reduced to the more simple elements of form, texture and contrast.

Working in RAW is the best way to go mono because you can use the sliders within the Adobe Camera Raw converter to control exposure to make sure you have the maximum amount of detail in your picture. And free from the constraints of colour, you can also apply more aggressive adjustments without so much fear of the image breaking up and looking unsightly. Still not convinced? Give this technique a try and you'll definitely believe us!

THE START IMAGE



Despite being sharply focused, our start image is lacking drama - something we can quickly introduce during our RAW conversion. By doing it using our special RAW-to-mono recipe you'll create an image that's full of detail and shows off the subject at its absolute best. Try it yourself over the page...



HOW RAW MAKES GREAT MONO EASY...

In this Photoshop and Elements technique you'll learn how to take one of your full-colour RAW files and turn it into a stunning black & white image. Sounds simple, right? Well yes and no. Once you follow the technique you'll find it's easy to do, but if you think creating great monotone images from RAW is just a matter of

dragging the Saturation slider to -100, you're in for a real treat because we'll be doing a little more creative tinkering than that. There are so many ways you can convert to black & white in Photoshop that you might also be wondering why you'd want to do it from RAW in the first place - the answer is quality. By going mono

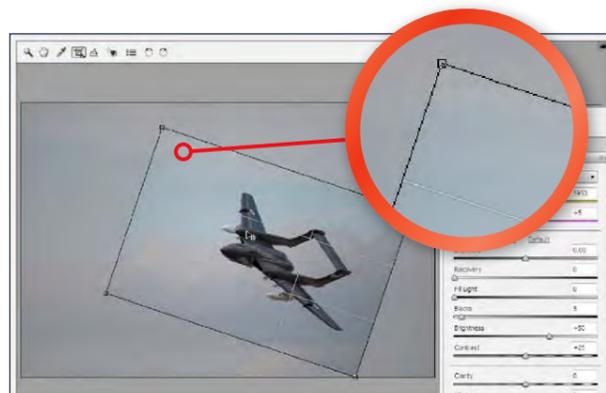
directly from a RAW you can push your conversion amazingly hard, much more so than with a JPEG, and with the colour removed from your image you're free to wring every last drop of drama and detail out of the image without worrying about unsightly shifts in hue or fringing.

So what do we mean by pushing the conversion hard? It's all about grabbing the sliders and pushing them to their extremes, so while you might normally shy away from using large amounts of Fill Light or from using very high or low settings on the Temperature

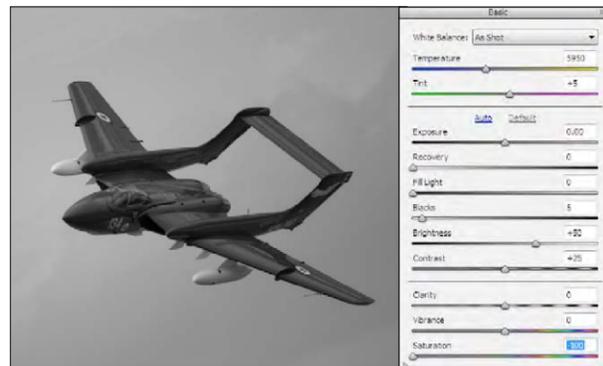
slider, these are the choices that make this technique work. With this kind of aggressive RAW conversion you may find that an increase in Noise can be a by-product, but the extra grain is so suited to mono images that it almost becomes a positive addition to the style of your shot.

All the tools we'll be using are available in the Basic tab, so you can do it in any version of Adobe Camera Raw. And once you've seen how much better the results can be than from a simple desaturated RAW file, you'll never look back.

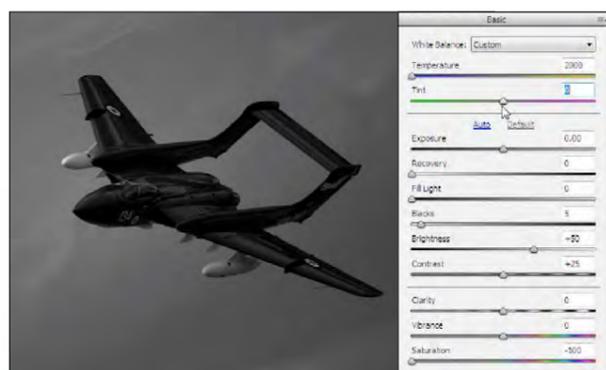
YOU'LL BE FREE TO WRING EVERY LAST DROP OF DRAMA FROM YOUR IMAGE...



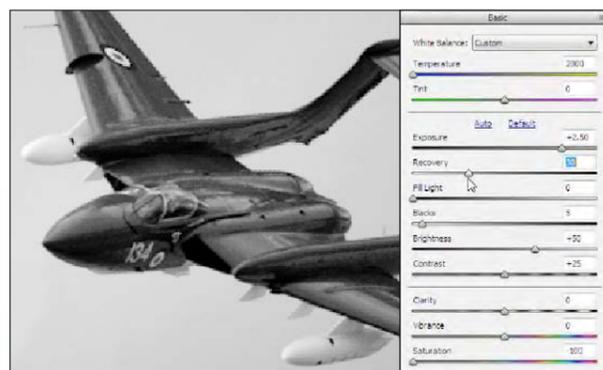
1 START OPEN AND CROP. Select your chosen RAW file and once the Adobe Camera Raw interface has launched click on the *Crop Tool* from the top of the palette. Drag it out over the subject, losing a little of the dead space and then moving your cursor outside the crop box, click and drag to rotate it clockwise as shown above. Hit *Return* when you're done.



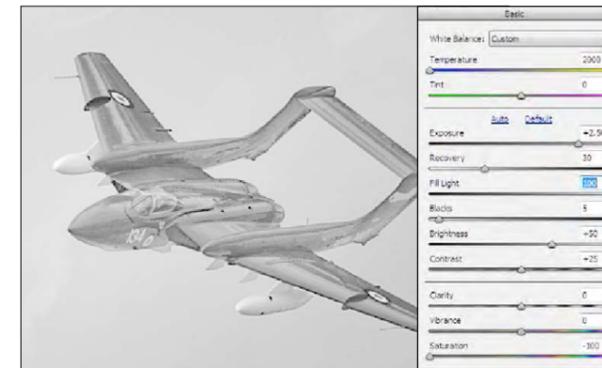
2 DESATURATE THE IMAGE. Now, to take all of the colour out of the picture, move down to the bottom of the palette and click and drag the *Saturation* slider all the way to -100. The *Vibrance* slider can be left at 0, because when moved to -100, there's no colour left in the image for it to control. You'll now have a black & white picture, but it'll look a bit grey and washed out.



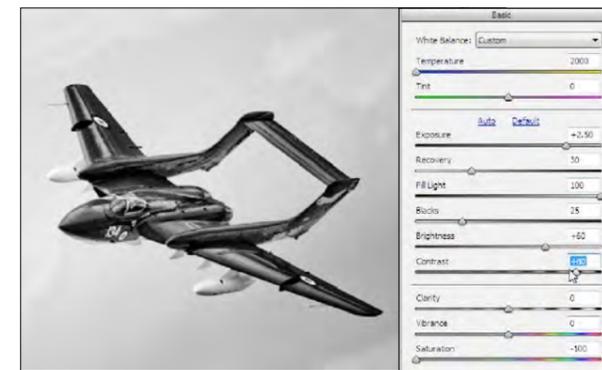
3 SET THE TEMPERATURE & TINT. Although all of the colour has gone, the *Temperature* slider which controls White Balance can still have a big effect. Move it to the extremes of the scale and you'll see your picture take on some interesting effects. Here we've set it to a value of 2000 which darkens the sky. The *Tint* slider can work in a similar way, though we left ours at around 0.



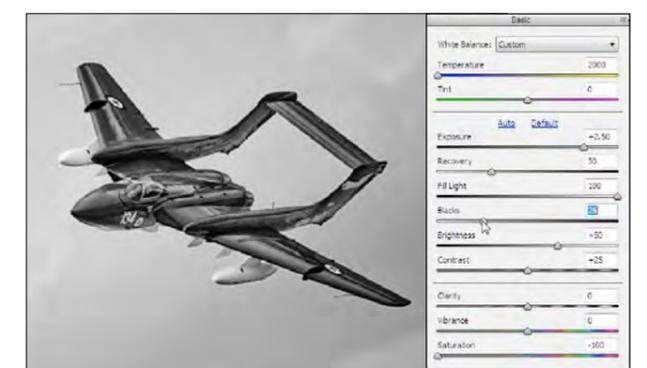
4 CONTROL THE EXPOSURE. The picture will be looking a little dark at this point, so click and drag the *Exposure* slider to a setting of +2.50. This will vary if you're using your own image, but just hold the *Alt* key as you move the slider and stop when white areas start growing too large in the clipping preview. Moving the *Recovery* slider will minimise clipped highlights and here it's set to 30.



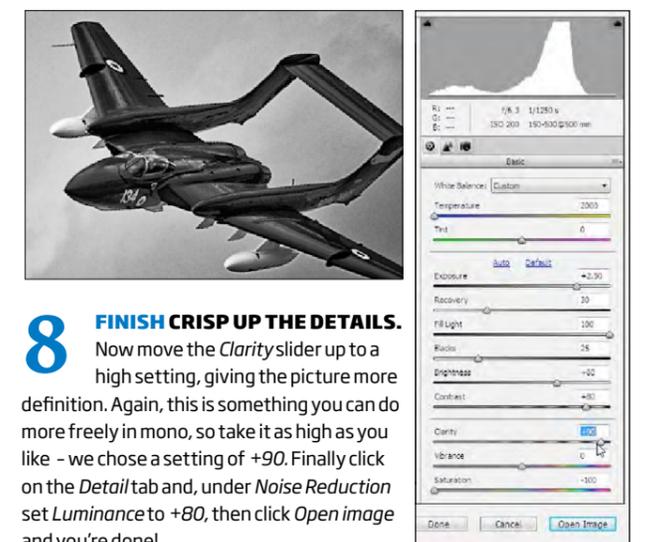
5 ENHANCE THE SHADOW AREAS. Now move down to the *Fill Light* slider and drag it all the way to 100. You'll notice lots of detail appear as the shadow areas of the picture are lightened. We've used the maximum amount available on our example image, but you should experiment to see what works best on your own shots, and stop when the level of detail looks right.



7 INCREASE CONTRAST. You'll now have a good balance, with 'true' highlight and shadow areas on show. The next step is to increase the *Contrast*, so drag that slider to the right to push more of the midtones into the highlight and shadow areas. We settled on around 80, but try higher settings to see what looks right on your image. We also lightened the pic a little, moving *Brightness* to +60.



6 ADD DEPTH TO THE SHADOWS. Using a very high setting for *Fill Light* will make the picture look a little washed out, but you can anchor the shadows once more using the *Blacks* slider. As you did with the *Exposure* and *Highlight* sliders, hold the *Alt* key while dragging the *Blacks* slider and a clipping preview will show when solid areas of black are appearing - we stopped at a setting of 25.



8 FINISH CRISP UP THE DETAILS. Now move the *Clarity* slider up to a high setting, giving the picture more definition. Again, this is something you can do more freely in mono, so take it as high as you like - we chose a setting of +90. Finally click on the *Detail* tab and, under *Noise Reduction* set *Luminance* to +80, then click *Open image* and you're done!

GET EVEN BETTER MONO USING RAW'S HSL/GRAYSCALE TAB



If you have the full version of Photoshop you can take even more control of your black & white images using the HSL/Grayscale tab within Adobe Camera Raw. This controls the Hue, Saturation and Lightness of the individual colours in your image, but much like using the *Temperature* slider in the technique above, just because your picture is desaturated doesn't mean you can't still use this tab. All the colour information is still in the file for you to play with.

To give it a go, open the image as normal and then, instead of following the steps above click on the HSL/Grayscale tab (the fourth one along). Next click the *Convert to Grayscale* option and you'll be presented with sliders under the *Grayscale mix* heading. Now simply move these around until you get a good blend. Lower values will darken those previously coloured parts of the image they correspond to, and high ones will lighten them. Give it a go for a really creative look.

BALANCE YOUR SHOTS IN RAW

PERFECT YOUR PICTURES BY BLENDING
TOGETHER DIFFERENT RAW
CONVERSIONS OF THE SAME IMAGE

ONE OF THE BIGGEST challenges for a landscape photographer is overcoming contrast. All too often, the sky is much brighter than the foreground, and because your camera can't take in the same range of brightness as your eyes, it means your shots will look unbalanced. If you expose correctly for the sky, your land will

be too dark for a pleasing image, and if you allow the foreground to govern your exposure settings, the sky will be burnt out into an empty white patch that's devoid of detail. A solution can be found by using graduated neutral density filters over the lens to darken the sky, but this can be fiddly and time consuming. Want a better fix for an age-old problem? Of course you do – just read on to find it...

THE START IMAGE

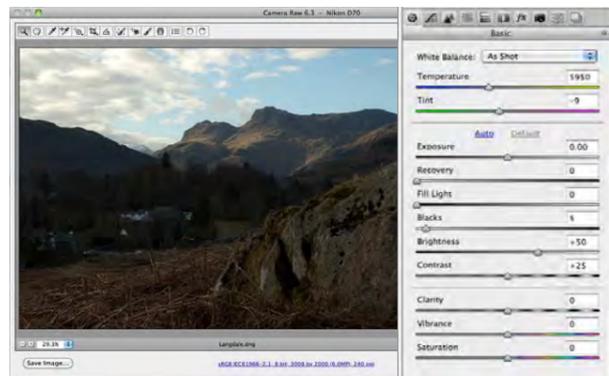


The landscape pic used in this technique is suffering from an underexposed foreground and lack of impact due to the imbalanced exposure.

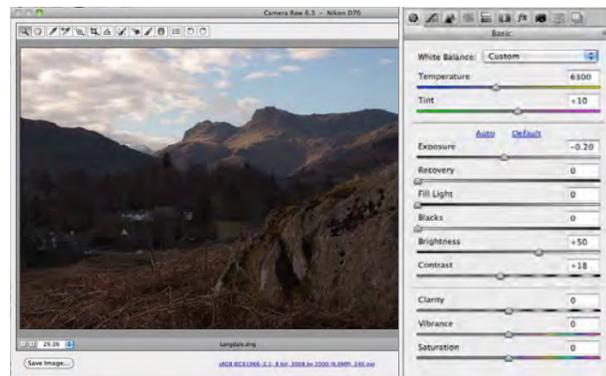
THE FINAL IMAGE

Our sky and foreground are nicely balanced, with good levels of detail in both. It's a world apart from our starting point.

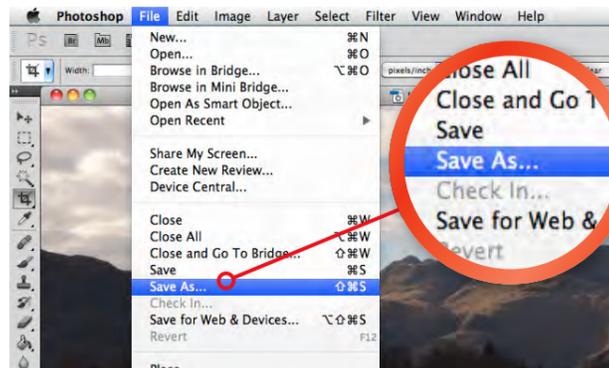




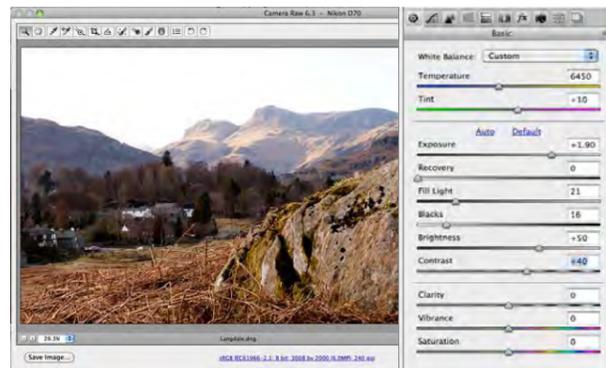
1 START ASSESS THE PROBLEM. Open your landscape image into Photoshop or Elements and it'll load into Adobe Camera Raw. Here we have a common landscape problem - the foreground is very under-exposed compared to the sky. To solve this we'll make two conversions - one for the sky and one for the land - and then we'll blend them together. They're from the same file so they'll line up perfectly.



2 MAKE THE SKY CONVERSION. Ignoring the dark foreground and focusing solely on the sky, tweak the sliders in the RAW converter to get the best-looking result. The settings you use will be different for each image you convert, but for our file we went for *Temperature 6300, Tint +10, Exposure -0.20, Brightness +50 and Contrast +18*. All the other settings were on zero.



3 OPEN AND SAVE THE SKY. Click on *Open Image* at the bottom of the RAW dialog, and the picture will load into the regular interface. It's a good idea to save this conversion so you can always come back to it, so go to *File*→*Save As* and give it a suitable name. Photoshop's native format will give the best quality, so pick that in *Save As*. Once you've done this, just leave it on screen.



4 MAKE THE LAND CONVERSION. Open the original file again, and you'll bring up the RAW with the settings you've just made. Now ignore the sky and adjust the sliders to give a good-looking foreground. On our image, we went for *Temperature 6450, Tint +10, Exposure +1.90, Fill Light 21, Blacks 16, Brightness +50 and Contrast +40*. All other settings were on zero. Click *Open Image* again.



5 COMBINE THE TWO VERSIONS. Once the foreground conversion appears, hit *Ctrl+A* to select it, and then *Ctrl+C* to copy it. You can now close it by hitting *Ctrl+W* (you don't need to save it). The image with the good sky will now be on screen, so hit *Ctrl+V* and your foreground conversion will be pasted into the same document. Go to *Window*→*Layers* and you'll see them stacked in the *Layers palette*.



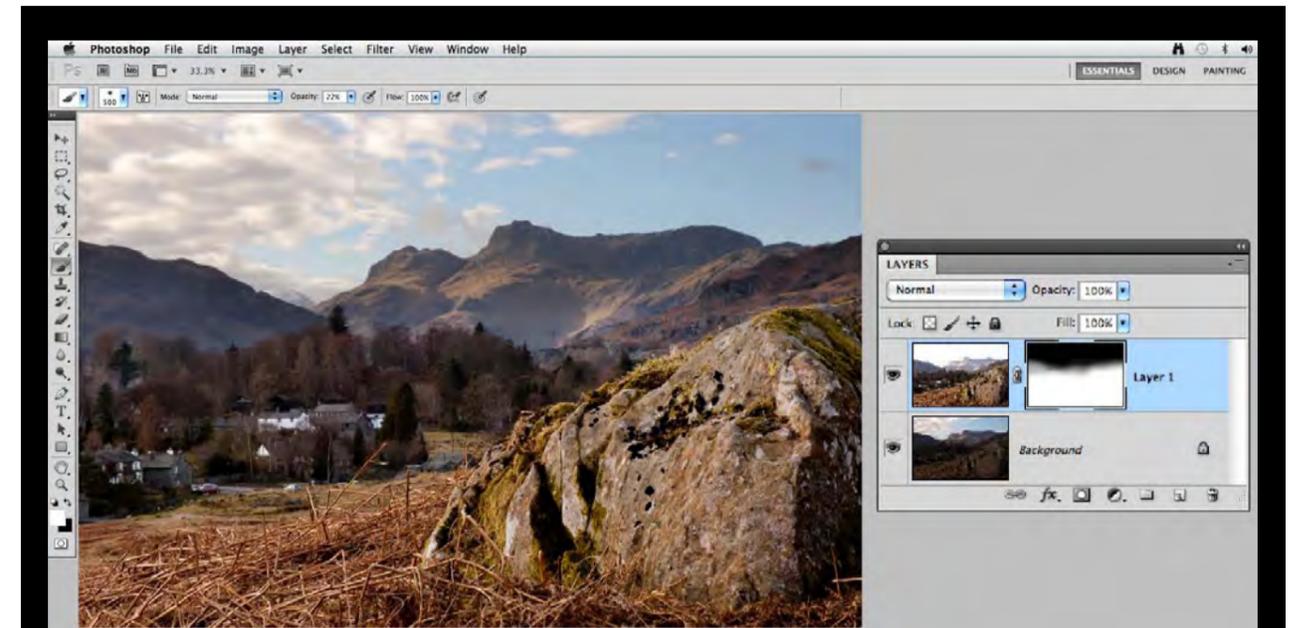
6 BLEND THE PICS TOGETHER. To get the best from both conversions, pick up the *Eraser Tool* and in the Options bar at the top of the screen, choose a large, soft-edged brush, and run it across the sky to reveal the better sky from the Layer beneath. As you approach the skyline, drop the *Opacity* to around 50%, and work over the mountains to get a natural-looking blend between the two Layers.



7 ADD A LITTLE DRAMA. We're getting close now, but the sky could do with a bit of extra oomph. With the *Lasso Tool*, select the top part of the sky and then click the *Refine Edge* button and move the *Feathers* slider to *150px*. In the *Layers palette*, click the *Adjustment Layer* icon and choose *Levels* from the list, then move the black point and midpoint sliders a little to the right to darken the sky.



8 FINISH WARM UP THE IMAGE. Click the *Adjustment Layer* icon once more and again, select *Levels*. In the *Levels palette*, click where it says *RGB* and choose the *Red* channel. Move the midpoint slider a little to the left. Now click where it says *Red* and choose the *Blue* channel. Move the same slider slightly to the right, and you'll have a fabulous warm-up effect to finish off your picture.



USING LAYER MASKS TO BLEND YOUR DIFFERENT RAW CONVERSIONS

In this exercise, we've used the *Eraser Tool* to create the blend between one RAW conversion and the other. While this is intuitive, it's not the most refined way of working, as once you've removed the pixels you have no simple way of backtracking other than the *Undo History* - and this isn't retained when you save the file. A better, more advanced method is to use a Layer Mask instead, as this lets you hide or reveal the pixels from the Layer beneath, without removing them. All versions of Photoshop feature Layer Masks, and Elements 9 and 10 also have them too. Instead of using the Eraser on Step 6, click the *Layer Mask* icon in the Layers palette. Then you simply use a black paintbrush to 'make a hole' in the Layer and reveal the pixels from beneath, or use a white brush to hide them.

USE RAW FOR EASY RETRO FILM EFFECTS

Ps
Pse

ADD TONING AND COLOUR EFFECTS TO YOUR RAW FILES FOR A BRILLIANT VINTAGE LOOK

THE START IMAGE



The start image used in this technique was taken at a WWII re-enactment weekend and shows the homeguard taking a more relaxed approach to life. With such attention to detail when it comes to uniforms and vehicles, it was crying out for the retro film treatment.



THE FINAL IMAGE

With suitable toning and faded colours, this modern RAW file becomes a dead ringer for an aged, distressed vintage print.



COOK UP A RETRO FILM EFFECT IN RAW...

Throughout this chapter we've been looking at how editing your camera's RAW files can help you get better pictures, but RAW isn't just about improving image quality - you can use it to apply great creative effects, too! That's what we'll be doing in this technique, taking a regular looking image and giving it a

vintage make-over, using some of the lesser-used tabs within the Adobe Camera Raw interface. In a few clicks you'll discover that you can give any picture a faded and vintage charm.

We'll first be using the *HSL / Grayscale* tab to change the colours in the picture, making them somewhat less than true to

life and mimicking the hit-and-miss results of early colour film and the look of a decaying print. Next we'll use the *Split Toning* tab to apply separate hues to the highlights and shadows of our picture, furthering the vintage effect, before finally using the *FX* tab to place a light vignette on the image and also give it a light dusting of film grain.

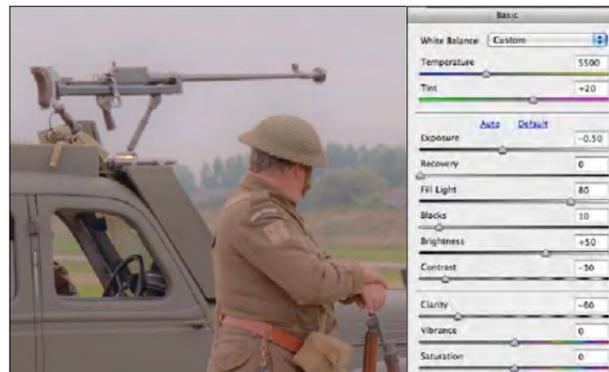
Now if you're looking at your version of Adobe Camera Raw and you can't find those tabs, you're almost certainly running Photoshop Elements, or an older version of Photoshop CS -

something before Photoshop CS3 - because these tabs only appear in the later versions. It's just one of the extras that come with the full package.

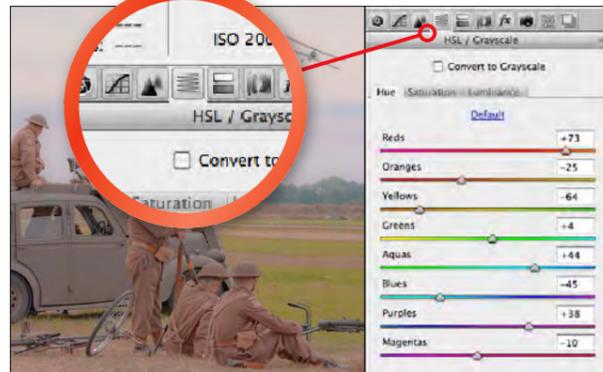
Before adding the vintage effect we will need to apply a few basic exposure changes under the *Basic* tab to make sure there's plenty of detail in the image.

Remember you're not limited to retro-styled subjects such as vintage re-enactments - this simple technique can give an aged feel to contemporary portraits, too. Give it a try and you might be surprised...

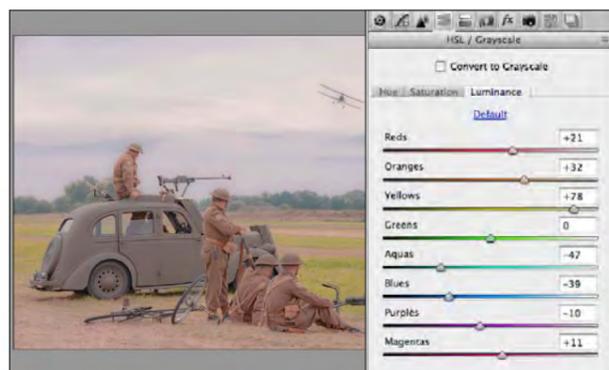
WE'LL USE VARIOUS TABS IN RAW TO GIVE OUR PICTURE A FADED VINTAGE CHARM...



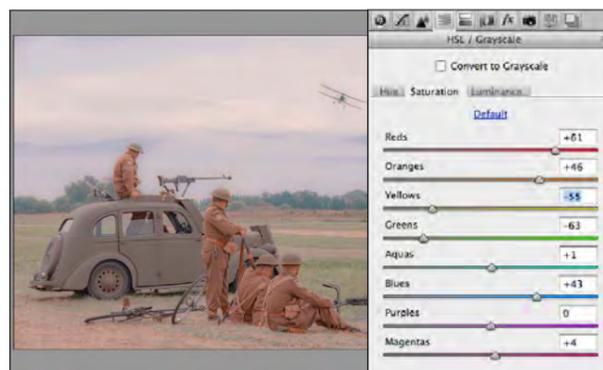
1 START OPEN & USE THE BASIC TAB. Open your RAW image to launch the Camera Raw Converter, then set the *White Balance* to *Daylight*, *Tint* to +20, *Exposure* to -0.50, *Recovery* to 0, *Fill Light* to 80, *Blacks* to 10, *Brightness* to +50, *Contrast* to -30 and *Clarity* to -60 (the latter two to give the pic a faded look). Finally leave *Saturation* and *Vibrance* sliders at 0.



2 CHANGE THE COLOUR RANGE. Now, click on the *HSL / Grayscale* tab (the fourth one along in the full version of Photoshop). Here you can control the individual colours that make up the image, independently altering their Hue, Saturation and Luminance to suit. Start by making the colours less true to life under the *Hue* tab by setting the sliders as shown above.



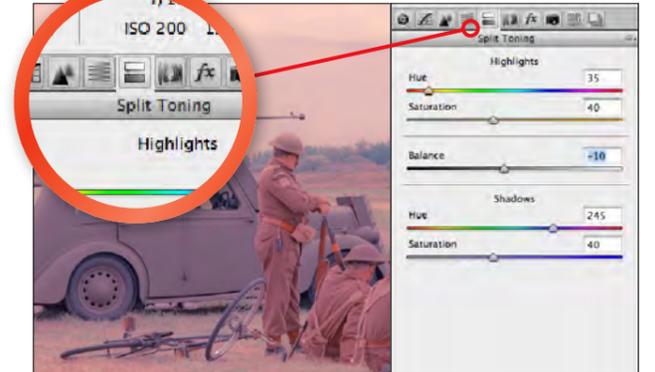
3 ALTER LUMINANCE. Next click on the *Luminance* settings. Here you can control the brightness of individual colours, so for instance if you want to make the green grass in a picture lighter, but not alter anything else, you'd move the *Greens* and *Yellows* sliders up. Again, for our example pic, follow the settings above, but when using your own shots make sure you experiment to see what looks best.



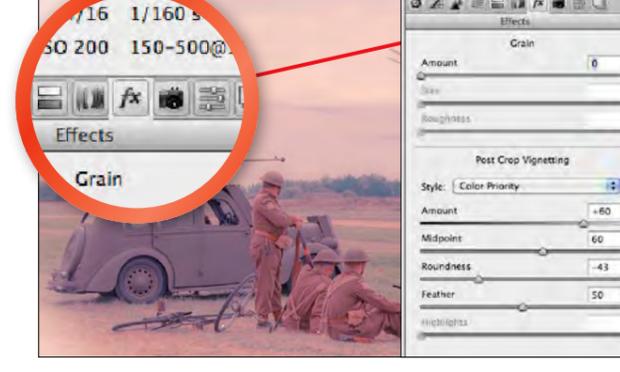
4 CONTROL SATURATION. Finally, under the *HSL / Grayscale* tab, click on the *Saturation* settings. These control the intensity of individual colours, and in the case of our example image, we want to increase saturation in the *Reds* and *Oranges* and lower it in the *Greens* and *Yellows* as shown. After these settings in the HSL tab, you should have an interesting looking technicolour effect!



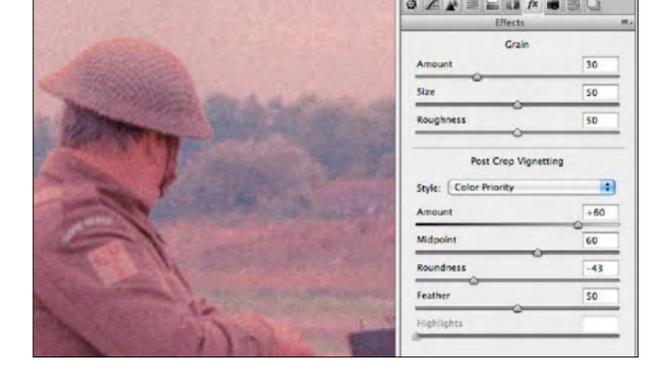
5 RECOLOUR THE HIGHLIGHTS. Now click on the *Split Toning* tab next to the *HSL / Grayscale* tab and move down under the *Highlights* heading. Set the *Saturation* to 30 and then move the *Hue* slider to add a toning effect to the light parts of the image. Warmer highlights tend to work best, but just see what suits your image. Here, we went for an orange colour, setting *Hue* to 35.



6 RECOLOUR THE SHADOWS. Next it's time to add a similar effect to the shadows, so move down the tab to that heading. Again, set the *Saturation* to around 30 and move the *Hue* slider - we've gone for some cooler shadows here using a blue colour with the *Hue* set to 245. Finally, tweak the *Balance* slider to bias the effect towards the highlights at the left of the shadows at the right (-10 here).

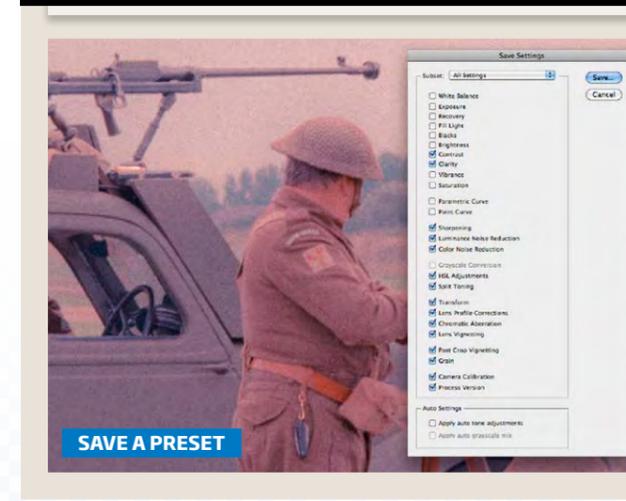


7 ADD A VIGNETTE. To finish off, we'll add a vignette. On some pics, darker edges work, but here a lightening of the corners is what we're after. Click on the *FX* tab and under *Post Crop Vignette*, pick *Color Priority*. Move the *Amount* slider to +60 (a negative setting will darken the edges) and then alter the position and shape of the vignette to suit with the *Midpoint*, *Roundness* and *Feathers* sliders.



8 FINISH ADD SOME GRAIN. A dusting of grain will also suit the vintage effect, so under *Grain*, set *Amount* to 30. *Size*, which controls the size of the individual 'grains' can be moved up to around 50 and *Roughness*, which controls the contrast within the *Noise*, can also be set to 50. For all three, higher values will give coarser images. Finally, hit *Open Image* to complete your retro conversions.

SAVE YOUR VINTAGE EFFECT AS A RAW RECIPE



Once you've created your vintage photo effect recipe, there's a good chance that you'll want to apply it to other images in your collection. To do it, click on the fly-out menu next to the *Save Settings* option marked *Save Settings*...

You'll then be prompted to tick which settings you want to save (see the list on the right), so make sure that all the ones you want to apply are ticked. For example, here we've ticked the majority of them, including the *HSL Adjustments*, *Split Toning*,

Post Crop Vignette and *Grain* boxes. However, it's a good idea to untick the settings input under the *Basic* tab as these will vary more widely from image to image. Now click *Save* and you'll be prompted to give a name to your effect, so type that in and hit *OK*.

Now, when you load up any image, you'll be able to click on the *Presets* tab and choose the effect you saved from the list. It's a great way to save time when applying creative effects to your RAWs, so make sure you give it a try.

ADVANCED RAW SKILLS

USE THE ADJUSTMENT BRUSH AND GRADUATED FILTER TOOLS TO CONVERT RAWs LIKE A PRO

WE'VE SEEN HOW a RAW file can be converted a number of times and blended together to give different exposure and contrast effects to different parts of the scene, but imagine how great it would be if you could do all this in one single RAW conversion. Well, provided you have the full version of Photoshop (CS4 or higher), you

can. It's all made possible thanks to the Adjustment Brush, which allows you to apply different RAW conversion settings to different areas of an image. On top of that, there's also a nifty tool that applies a graduated filter effect, so in this tutorial, we'll explore both and see how you can make dramatic changes to exposure, colour and contrast in different parts of your pictures in one fell swoop...

 **THE START IMAGE**



The start pic used in this technique has potential but needs attention. It's underexposed, the white balance is too cold and the horizon is wonky. Let's get to work!



THE FINAL IMAGE
Considering the rough starting point, this seaside scene has polished up rather well in RAW, with a perfect balance to the exposure and contrast. 



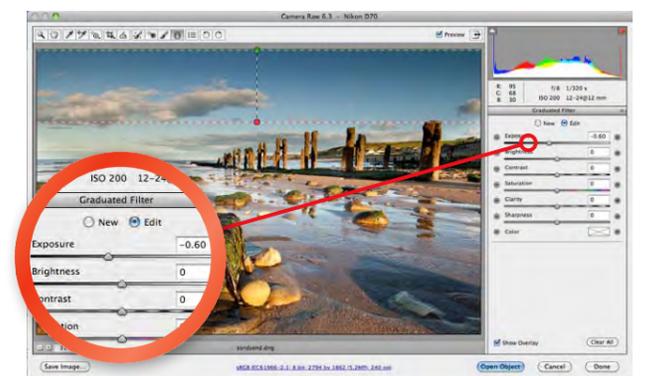
1 START STRAIGHTEN THE RAW. Open your RAW file into Photoshop CS4 or higher, and it'll load into Camera Raw. The first thing we need to address here is the wonky horizon, so select the *Straighten tool* from the Toolbar, and drag the mouse along the horizon from the left. Release the mouse on the right of the horizon and the image will straighten up. Double-click to see the squared-up image.



2 BRIGHTEN THE FOREGROUND. We need to get the foreground looking better as it's currently under-exposed, so move the *Exposure* slider to the right until the foreground's lighting has improved. On our image, we ramped up the *Exposure* to +1.80 – nearly two stops above our in-camera setting. Your sky will bleach out when you do this, but don't worry, as we can bring it back.



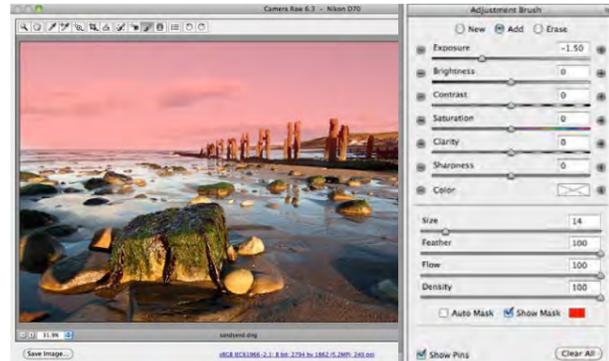
7 TWEAK THE SETTINGS. With the main changes made, return to the regular interface by clicking on the *Hand Tool*, and you can now fine-tune your conversion, adjusting all the effects you've created along with the image itself. To get a bit more detail into the foreground, push *Fill Light* up to around 30, and then to prevent it looking too washed out, boost *Blacks* to 10 to thicken the shadows.



8 FINISH REDUCE THE GRAD STRENGTH. We're just about there now, but the grad is looking a little unnatural at the top. To reduce its strength, hit G to select the *Graduated Filter* again and click on one of the small circles to make the grad editable. Move the *Exposure* slider back to about -0.60 to soften the effect, and then hit *Open Image* to load the picture into the standard Photoshop interface.



3 ADD A HINT OF WARMTH. The image is looking a little cool at the default White Balance setting, so move the *Temperature* slider up to around 6500 to warm things up. With that done, click on the *Adjustment Brush* (or hit the shortcut K) and with *New* selected at the top of the palette, move the *Exposure* slider down to about -1.50. Nothing will change, as we haven't used the brush yet.



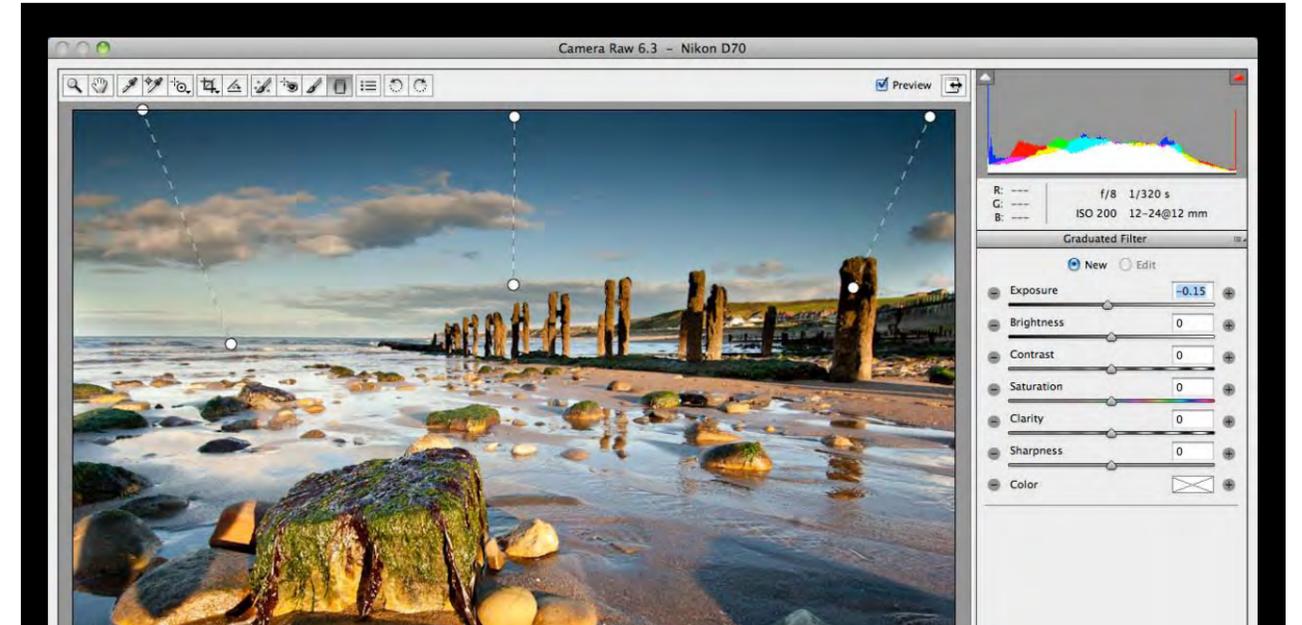
4 USE THE ADJUSTMENT BRUSH. At the bottom of the palette, set *Feather*, *Flow* and *Density* to 100, and then set *Size* so the brush covers half the height of the sky (14 on our pic). Now paint over the sky, and run the brush down so the feathered edge touches the horizon. The sky will darken, thanks to the new *Exposure* value we've applied to the painted area. Tick *Show Mask* and you'll see it.



5 ADJUST THE BRUSH. It's called the *Adjustment Brush* for a good reason, because we can now apply further changes to the area covered by it. We need our sky to be a bit darker, so move the *Exposure* slider to the left until the pic looks nicely balanced. We went for -2.00, and to give the clouds more stand-out, we then ramped up the *Contrast* to +50. We left all the other sliders set to 0.



6 APPLY A GRAD FILTER EFFECT. To give a traditional look and further darken the top of the sky, select the *Graduated Filter* (G) and set the *Exposure* to -1.00, and all the other sliders to 0. Click on the very top of the image and drag downwards to the top of the groynes, and you'll see the green and red dashed lines that indicate the start and finish of the graduated effect.



USING MULTIPLE ADJUSTMENTS & GRADS

To keep things as versatile as possible, you can use several different *Adjustment Brushes* and *Graduated Filters*, all with different effects. Above, we've used three grads to subtly enhance the sky, and on the left, you can see the 'pins' of five different *Adjustment Brushes* to fine-tune the *Exposure* and *Contrast* settings over the scene. The beauty of multiple localised adjustments like this is that you can work on particular sections within an image with each tool, rather than trying to make a complex alteration over the whole scene with just one grad or *Adjustment Brush*.

To create a new *Adjustment Brush*, simply hit K and then ensure that *New* is selected at the top of the palette. For a new *Graduated Filter*, hit G and drag on the image. In both cases, you'll need to avoid clicking on any existing adjustment pins that are present, as this will take you into the editing mode on that particular pin, and allow you to further alter it.

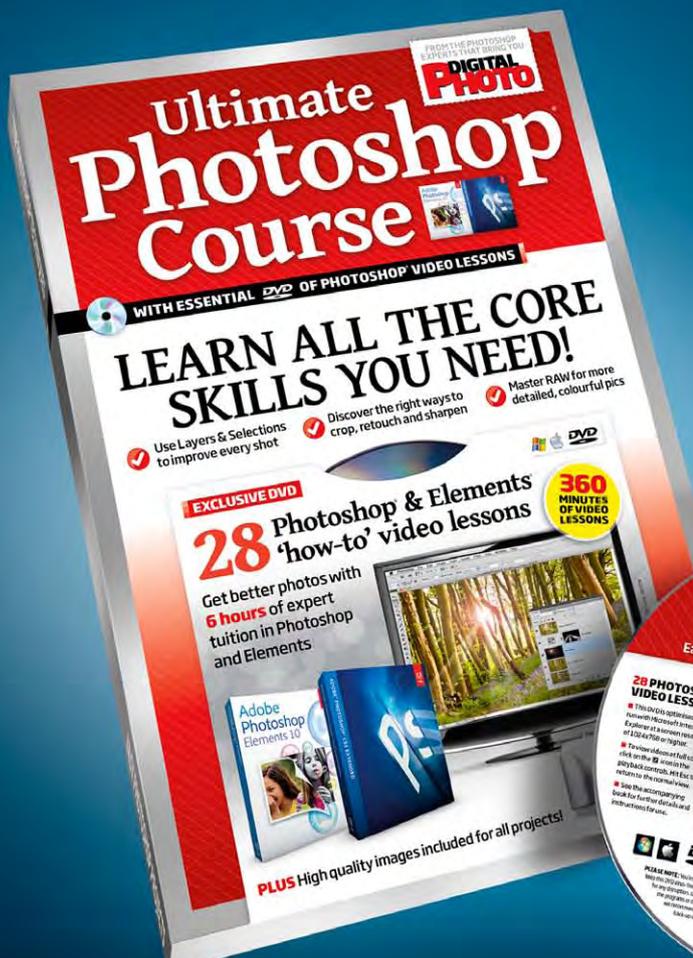
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