

Photoshop Camera Raw – Basic Image Adjustments

You can decide if Camera Raw automatically sets the adjustment values as it loads a new raw file or if you want the file to appear totally as shot. When in Camera Raw, press [Ctrl][K] to bring up the options box or click the 3-dots 3 lines icon, top left. **Auto does NOT prevent you from making subsequent changes.**

Before making any changes, make sure that the two little triangles at the top of the histogram chart are activated (surrounded by a white line – not easy to see). This will display shadow (blue) and highlight (red) clipping.

White Balance

Choose from a range of presets or adjust the colour **Temperature** to suit

Tint

Can be used for removing colour casts.

Exposure

Some compensation can be made for incorrect exposure either positive or negative. Similar to but more powerful than the right adjuster in Levels

Recovery

This reduces highlight clipping without effect on shadows or mid tones.

Fill Light

Increasing this will lighten the shadows to show more detail. Similar to Recovery, both give better results than the Shadow/Highlight adjustment in Photoshop and Elements.

Blacks

Increase this value to a point where the shadows just start to clip. This ensures you have true blacks in your image. Rather like the left adjuster in Levels

Brightness

Correction for mid tones similar to the gamma (central) slider in Levels.

Contrast

Much improved over the Contrast adjustment in Photoshop in that it should not increase the white point or the shadow point, similar to the effect of an 'S' curve. However, use as a secondary tool to Exposure.

Clarity

A rather clever effect that applies a gentle sharpening across the mid tone range giving a noticeable range increase. Negative values can be effective for smoothing skin tones in portraits.

Vibrance

Similar to Saturation, but has more effect on the less saturated colours.

Saturation

Increases the colour saturation across the whole range.

Sharpening – Set image size to 100% to see effects

Amount

Higher setting, more sharpening. About 100 is a good start

Radius

Sets how far the sharpening 'halo' extends. Around 1 to 2 is an average setting.

Detail

Hold down the [Alt] key while adjusting. Areas visible are being sharpened.

Masking

Hold down the [Alt] key while adjusting. Dark areas are protected from the sharpening effect.

Luminance and **Colour** sliders are used to suppress noise. They also slightly blur the image.