

BASIC ADJUSTMENTS

Adjustment Layers for Basic Normalization

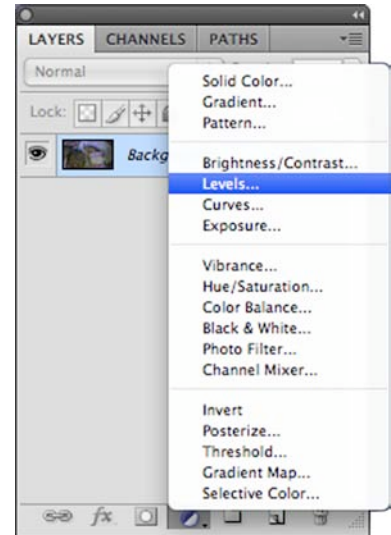
Cameras do not produce printer-ready photos. All shots need to be tweaked. Adjustment Layers allow you to tweak the photo without altering the raw picture data. This is called 'non-destructive editing'. It is possible to go back and re-tweak these Adjustment Layers at any time, making this a very powerful method.

Adjustment Layers are most easily added by clicking on the small black & white circle logo at the bottom of the Layers palette. They can also be added from the Layers menu.

The **visibility** of a Layer can be toggled on and off by clicking on the Eyeball icon on the left side of the Layer. This makes it easier to see the effect any single layer has on the photo.

Layers can be **repositioned** in the stack by dragging them on top of the line between any other two layers. Adjustment Layer work from the top down!

Layers can be **deleted** by dragging them to the Trashcan icon in the bottom right corner of the Layers palette.

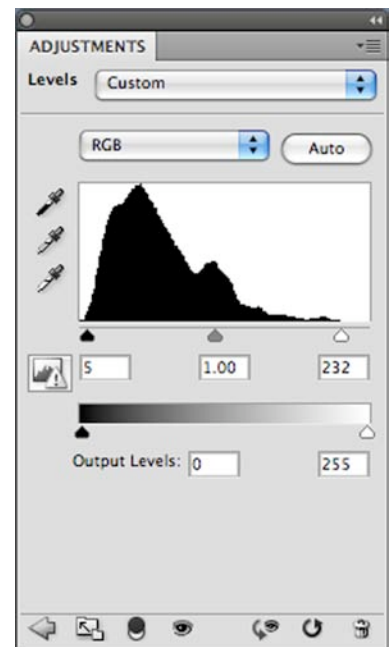


Levels

A Levels Adjustment Layer allows you to use the full tonal range of the photograph, even if your camera has come up short. Move the black and white triangles that indicate the maximum highlight (white point) and maximum shadow (black point) to hit the ends of the histogram, e.g. black = 5, white = 232. If the histogram stretches the full length of the graph, no changes need to be made.

Always make sure the Levels Adjustment Layer is the first (bottom) layer in the group. Otherwise you will be losing data.

note: We will eventually return to the Layers Adjustment Layer to fine tune the Output Levels for whichever particular printing paper is being used.



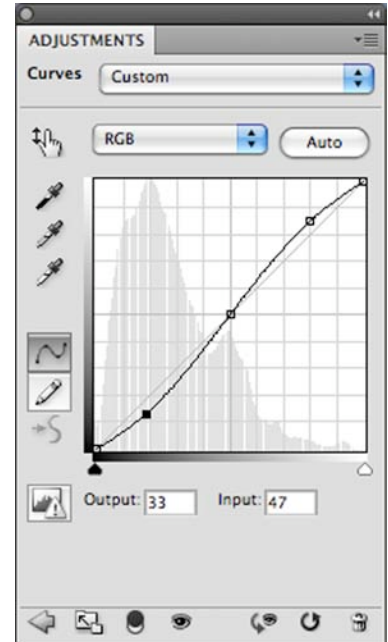
BASIC ADJUSTMENTS, cont'd.

Curves

A Curves Adjustment Layer allows you to add punch by raising the contrast.

- place a control point
in the dead center first
to lock the midtone
- place a control point
3/5th of the way up in the highlights
pull it up
- place a control point
3/5th of the way down in the shadows
pull it down

A curve in the other direction would *reduce* the contrast.



Processing Controls

Monochrome

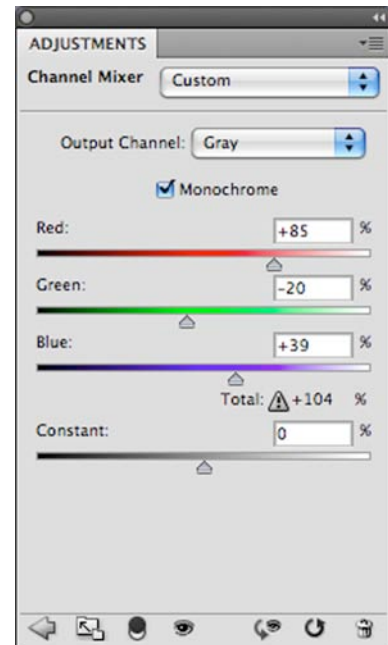
- Shoot in **full color** mode
- then use Channel Mixer (or Camera Raw)
- to convert to monochrome, aka B&W
- This allows full creativity in post-processing
- and will render numerous variations
- that make sense.

Greyscale Conversion with Channel Mixer

- add a Channel Mixer adjustment layer, just as you did with Levels and Curves
- click on the Monochrome box at the top of the dialog box
- slide the red, green and blue sliders until you get the most pleasing appearance
- the 3 numbers should add up to 100, but can go over or under a bit

for example:

- if there are red objects in your photo,
 - sliding the red up
 - will render those whiter,
 - sliding the red slider down
 - will render them darker
- if there are green objects in your photo,
 - sliding the green up
 - will render those whiter,
 - sliding the green slider down
 - will render them darker
- the third slider, in this case blue,
- would determine
- the overall brightness



BASIC ADJUSTMENTS, cont'd.

There is no 'correct' Greyscale Conversion.

It all depends on how *you* want *your* photograph to look.

Just make sure the whites are not blown out and the shadows do not block up.

There should be just a little bit of grey in the brightest highlights, and the shadows should be a little bit less than dead black.

If there are no details in the highlights or shadows the photo is not properly adjusted.

**If there is no detail in the highlights or shadows
then there is no photographic information there, and
this is not a properly processed photograph!**

Further adjustments

It is possible to add more adjustments, most likely additional Curves, to fine-tune your photos.

It is also possible to limit the adjustments to certain areas of the photos with Selections. Read on...

Other Adjustment Layers

Photoshop provides many ways to do the same thing. Levels and Curves are the traditional way to adjust your photos and are most directly connected to what is actually happening to the photograph.

Avoid using the following Adjustment Layers:

Brightness/Contrast	exactly what Curves does, but with less accuracy
Exposure	does what Levels does, but with less accuracy
Vibrance	for adjusting color saturation
Color Balance	for adjusting color in a very inaccurate manner

Sometimes useful Adjustment Layers:

Hue/Saturation	for adjusting color saturation but can be used to tone photos as well
Black & White	like Channel Mixer, but with more options making it a bit more confusing but can be used to tint photos

The other Adjustment Layers are for graphic effects and are not really useable for general photography.

Filters

Avoid using the Filters in Photoshop.

They are almost always an immediate path to tackiness.