

Stockton Camera Club

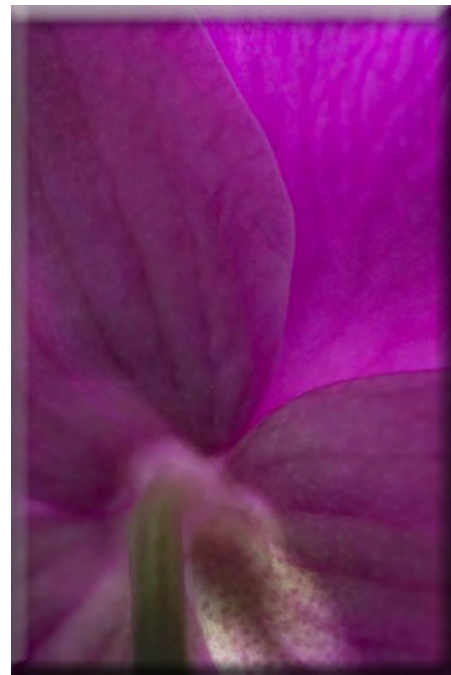
The Shutter Tripper

April 2019

March Digital/Print Images



Wasatch Majesty
Print of the Month - Dean Taylor



Pretty in Pink
Digital Image of the Month - Sharon McLemore

March 10's



Frosted Wolf
Dean Taylor



Purple Sparkler
Charlene Martin



Jack Rabbit in the Grass
Heide Stover



Mum Gone Crazy
Wayne Carlson



Burrowing Owl
Christine Blue



Mamma Always Said Eat Your Green Beans
Christine Blue



Tuscan Sunset
Sharon McLemore



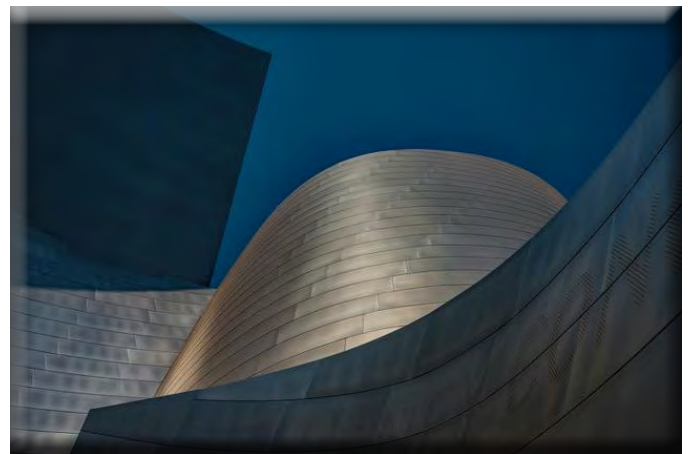
Green Green
Dean Taylor



Orange 1932 Five Window Coupe
Ron Wetherell



Solo Flight
Christine Blue



Gehry Architecture Abstract
Dean Taylor

Everything You Wanted to Know About Layers!

Join the Stockton Camera Club on Saturday April 13th for a class about using Layers in Photoshop and/or Elements. The class will start at 9:00, will be held at the Zion Luthern Church, 808 Porter Ave, Stockton, CA 95207 and exrend into the early afternoon.

The class will start at the beginning, at the request of several people, and will cover:

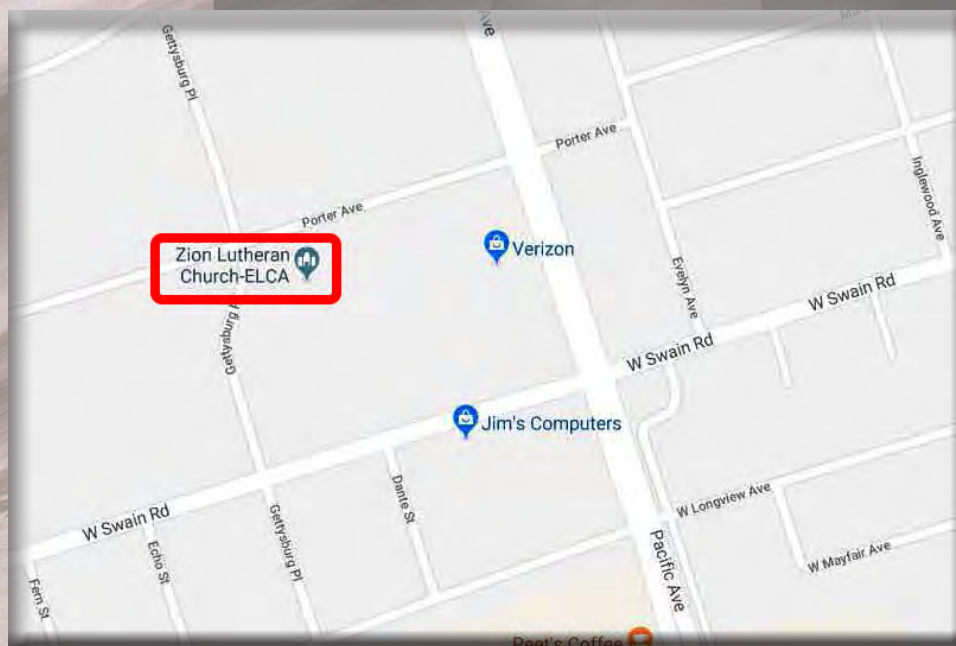
**How to use Layers, Blending Modes and Luminosity Masks
Plus much more**

There will be coffee in the morning and pizza for lunch.
There will be a charge of \$10 for SCC members and \$15 for non-members.

For more information, please contact:

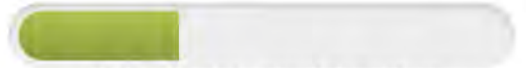
Doug Ridgway

doug_flyfisher@yahoo.com or (209) 617-7050





\$31,990 of \$100,000 goal



Raised by 232 people in 9 days

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Picture Tim Ulmer Healthy

Picture this, our dear friend and community servant Tim Ulmer is facing a health challenge that impacts not only Tim but our entire community. Many of us know Tim as a selfless servant offering his talent of photography to our fundraising and family events throughout San Joaquin County.

Tim has been diagnosed with Hairy Cell Leukemia, a life-threatening cancer.

Tim's treatment will begin in early March with five straight days of chemotherapy resulting in compromising his immune system. For the next 3 months Tim will be in treatment that leaves him weak, unable to keep his business open, and unable to fulfill his philanthropic photography work.

Tim Ulmer has spent countless hours documenting our fundraising events-often free of charge. Tim needs us to step up now as he faces an immediate need to cover the mounting costs related to the cancer treatment, lost wages, special dietary items, meals, and other living expenses.

Photographs have a way of feeling, touching and loving. It remembers little things and captures the humanity of the moment. It is our moment to capture true humanity through our giving. Together we can and will meet our \$100,000 goal!

Picture a healthy, vibrant Tim Ulmer.



SCC Officers 2017

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President's Message

April 2019

By Heide Stover

President's Message

We had a very small group of members show up for our last meeting. I do hope we can get more participation in the future. The judge has good comments about the images and prints and being a print person pointed out more than most judges when it came to the prints.

I am sad that I can't make it to Doug's Layer Class. It's so important to understand layers these days. It's good to have learning opportunities along with our competitions and great that we have experienced members to help with this.

I'm currently working with Skylum to form a partnership between them and our camera club. This would give our club a 10% discount on their products. I will keep the club informed.

Migratory birds are pretty much gone for now. But, with spring, comes flowers and babies. So, there is still plenty to photograph. So, get out there and shoot. Remember, no meeting in April so I will see you all in May.

Happy Shooting

A Big Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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2019 Calendar of Events

Every 3rd Thursday (Except April, June & Aug) 6:30 PM	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	Membership Meeting Contact Heide Stover h1stover@aol.com
Saturday April 13	Zion Lutheran Church-ELCA 808 Porter Ave, Stockton, CA 95207	April Workshop - Layers 0900 - Early Afternoon
Thursday May 16	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	May General Meeting Special Subject - Backlit
Thursday June 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	June General Meeting Prints only with no special subject
Thursday July 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	July General Meeting Special Subject - Gates/Fences
Aug TBA	TBA	Annual Pot Luck
Thursday September 19	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	September General Meeting Special Subject - Photo Journalism
Thursday October 17	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	October General Meeting Special Subject - Monochromatic Color Scheme
Thursday November 21	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	November General Meeting Special Subject - Prints Only
Thursday December 19	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	December General Meeting Special Subject - Tools

2020 Calendar of Events

January 16	TBA	Annual Banquet
Thursday February 20	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	February General Meeting Special Subject - Motion/Movement
Thursday March 19	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	March General Meeting Special Subject - Sequence of 3
April	TBA	April Workshop/Photo Opportunity
Thursday May 21	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	May General Meeting Special Subject - Urban/Cityscapes
Thursday June 18	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	June General Meeting Special Subject - Prints Only
July 19	West Lane Bowling Alley Stockton	July General Meeting Special Subject - Reflections

Meeting Notes March 2019

Heide opened the meeting and introduced Jeff Pate, Darrell O'Sullivan and Kurk Porter as guests. Charlene Martin has rejoined - welcome!

1. Dean talked about the spring show "Expressions" sponsored by the Tracy Art League. It was a juried multi-media show. Elizabeth Parrish won 1st place and Dean took 2nd and 3rd place. Charlene was also accepted to the show. Congratulations to all.

2. The Lodi Community Art Center is having their 59th Annual Spring Art Show at the Lange Twins Winery in Acampo. It will start April 26 with free admission. Please call for further info:(209)333-3855

3. The Tuolumne Co. Art League is having its juried show in Columbia. This Sunday from 1-3 PM the judges will have a panel discussing the show. This is the 32nd year for the show.

4. Doug discussed the workshop he will be holding on April 13th, on how to do basic layers in Photoshop and Elements. It will start at 9AM. There will coffee and pizza. The cost is \$10 for club members and \$15 for non-members. Bring your lap top or a thumb drive. Please call him for further info: (209) 617-7050

5. Doug also announced that he getting together a South African Photo Trip in early Dec. It will be 9-14 days long. If you are interested please call him at the above number. It will be limited to 8 people.

6. It was discussed and decided to continue with the new way of showing competition digitals and prints. That means all digitals and prints will not be shown as their Class A, AA, or AAA, but will be mixed in Open or in their Special Subject. However, the scores will continue to remain with the Class they are in.

Dean introduced the judge, Larry Angier who has been judging for the last 32 years. He is a professional photographer who has traveled all over and judged all kinds of photo shows. He is from the Jackson area and is planning a trip to Serbia soon.

WINNER OF THE MONTH FOR PRINTS:

Dean Taylor for "Wasatch Majesty"

WINNER OF THE MONTH FOR DIGITALS:

Sharon McLemore for "Tuscan Sunset"

Congratulations to the winners!

There is no meeting or competition for the month of April.

The Special Subject for the May competition is: BACKLIT. Please let me know if there are any corrections or additions to these notes.

Thank you, Em

Stockton Camera Club
March 2019 Competition Standings
Congratulations to all the winners!!!

Digital Image of the Month – Pretty in Pink by Sharon McLemore
Print of the Month – Frosted Wolf by Dean Taylor

Please check out the website, <http://www.stockton-cameraclub.com/home.html>

Class A Standings	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Charlene Martin	38	27	9	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ron Wetherell	30	30	0	20	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Susanne Nichols	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lanny Brown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stan Sogsti	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brenda DeRoos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ed Richter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Class AA Standing	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Doug Ridgway	74	56	18	38	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sheldon McCormick	73	48	18	37	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elizabeth Parrish	68	50	18	38	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Trey Steinhart	38	28	10	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Christine Blue	38	28	10	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Class AAA Standing	TOTAL	OPEN	SS	FEB	MAR	MAY	JUN	JULY	SEPT	OCT	Nov	DEC
Heide Stover	76	57	19	39	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dean Taylor	76	56	20	36	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sharon McLemore	75	56	19	38	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Joanne Sogsti	74	55	19	40	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne Carlson	74	56	18	39	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Em McLaren	69	51	18	36	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Stockton Camera Club - 2019 Competition - March

Class A/Name	Last Name	Title	Open Score	SS Score	D or P	Total Open	Total SS	Total
Christine	Blue	Balls and Stripes	9		D AA			
Christine	Blue	Portrait of 2 Cranes	9		D AA			
Christine	Blue	Burrowing Owl	10		D AA			
Christine	Blue	Mamma Always Said Eat Your Green Beans		10	D AA			
Wayne	Carlson	Mum Gone Crazy	10		P AAA			
Wayne	Carlson	Pink Gerbera Daisy #3	9		P AAA			
Wayne	Carlson	Cabbage in Full Bloom	8		P AAA			
Wayne	Carlson	Laser Hits White Feathers		8	P AAA			
Charlene	Martin	Purple Sparkler	10		P A			
Charlene	Martin	Prayers for Peace	9		P A			
Charlene	Martin	Desert Grass	8		P A			
Charlene	Martin	Violet Kalidescope		9	P A			
Sheldon	McCormick	Ranch at Carrizo Plain	7		D AA			
Sheldon	McCormick	News Paper Rock	7		D AA			
Sheldon	McCormick	Soda Lake	7		D AA			
Sheldon	McCormick	Can't Pick One Color		8	D AA			
Em	McLaren	Simplicity	7		D AAA			
Em	McLaren	Storm Overhead	8		D AAA			
Em	McLaren	Posing for a Portrait	9		D AAA			
Em	McLaren	Shades of Yellow		9	D AAA			
Sharon	McLemore	The Hall of Mirrors, Versailles	8		D AAA			
Sharon	McLemore	Natures Fall Display	9		D AAA			
Sharon	McLemore	Tuscan Sunset	10		D AAA			
Sharon	McLemore	Pretty in Pink (POM)		10	D AAA			
Elizabeth	Parrish	Barn Door	7		D AA			
Elizabeth	Parrish	Winter in the Orchard	8		D AA			
Elizabeth	Parrish	Gear in Flight	7		D AA			
Elizabeth	Parrish	Pressed for Time		8	D AA			
Doug	Ridgway	Snow Dunes	10		P AA			
Doug	Ridgway	The Golden Gate & San Francisco		8	P AA			
Doug	Ridgway	Cormorants Sitting on a Log	9		P AA			
Doug	Ridgway	Seaweed, Bird Tracks & Lines in the Sand	9		P AA			
Joanne	Sogsti J	Southeastern Lubber Grasshopper	8		D AAA			
Joanne	Sogsti J	Peacock	9		D AAA			
Joanne	Sogsti J	Bubble Drop	8		D AAA			
Joanne	Sogsti J	Denali Green		9	D AAA			
Heide	Stover	Jack Rabbit in the Grass	10		D AAA			
Heide	Stover	Sandhill Crane Morning Flight	9		D AAA			
Heide	Stover	Ducks in a Row	9		D AAA			
Heide	Stover	Maple in the Aspens		9	D AAA			
Dean	Taylor	Wasatch Majesty (POM)	10		P AAA			
Dean	Taylor	Frosted Wolf	10		P AAA			
Dean	Taylor	Gehry Architecture Abstract	10		D AAA			
Dean	Taylor	Green Green		10	D AAA			
Ron	Wetherell	Orange 1932 Five Window Coupe		10	P AA			

2019 Competition Policy

A. GENERAL RULES

1. Only paid-up members may enter club competition.
2. Regular print and digital image competition period: Once each month except January. A competition year is February through December. Current regular meetings are February, March, May, July, September, October and December. The number of meetings may change from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Directors and approval of the general membership as facilities permit. The Annual Awards Dinner will be held in January.
3. A total of four (4) images (all prints, all digital or a combination of both) may be entered each competition month. A total of three (3) images may be entered in the Open Division and a total of one (1) in the Special Subject Division. The number of entries may change from time to time at the discretion of the Board of Directors and the approval of the general membership.
4. Each image will be scored from 6 to 10 points. All prints or digital images receiving 9 or 10 points will be classed as an honor image. The title of each print or digital image entered will be read before being evaluated. The name of the maker will be read for 9-point honor winners. Maker's names will be announced for the 10 point images after the Print & Digital Image-of-the-Month winners are chosen.
5. A print or digital image that does not receive an honor score, may be re-entered one more time in the same division.
6. A print or digital image may be entered in all divisions for which it qualifies; i.e., an honor image in Open may also be entered in the Special Subject Division at another competition. A print or digital image that receives an honor score may not be re-entered in the same division.
7. Any print or digital image that appears to be ineligible for competition or not qualified for a specific division could expect to be challenged. The Competition Vice-President shall decide whether or not the image is acceptable.
8. The exhibitor must have exposed each negative, slide or digital image entered. All images submitted for judging must be the work of the photographer/maker including the taking of the images and any digital enhancements and/or manipulation of the image. This does not apply to the processing of film or printing by a commercial processor.
9. The same image should not be entered both as a print and a projected digital image in the same competition.
10. In the event of absence or barring unforeseen circumstances, a member may submit make-up prints or digital images for one competition night per competition year; and whenever possible must submit all make-up prints or digital images at the meeting immediately following the month a member failed or was unable to submit the prints or digital images. Make-ups in the Special Subject Division must be the same subject as the month missed. Also, in case of absence a member may assign the responsibility of submitting his or her prints and/or digital images for competition to another member.
11. A club member who serves as judge cannot enter his or her own prints or digital images in the same competition. The judge's make-up prints or digital images can then be entered in another competition during that competition year. This is in addition to the once-a-year make-up provision already

allowed.

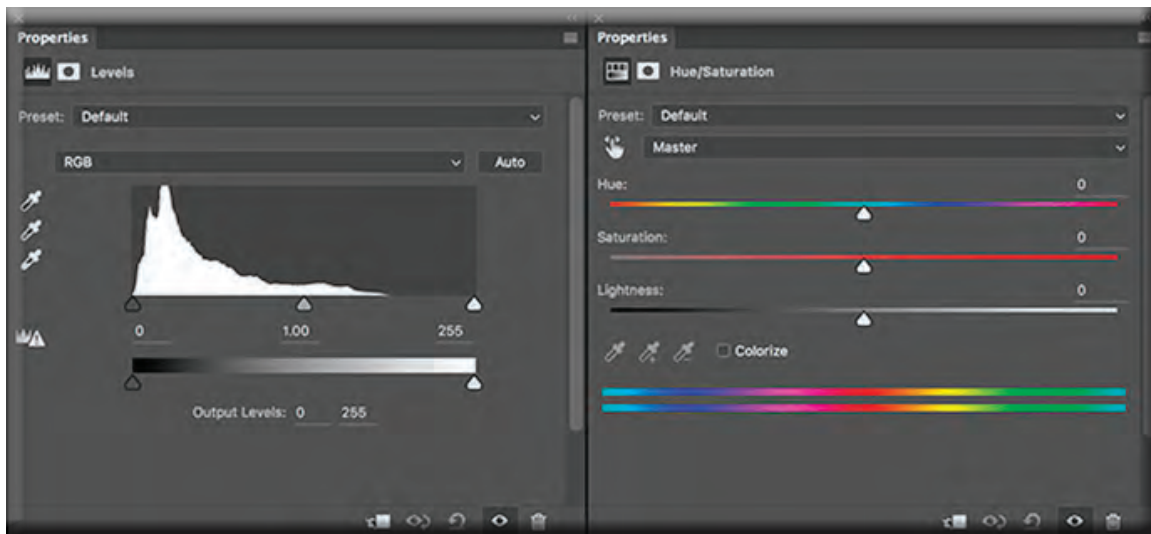
12. Prints or digital images may be projected/viewed briefly before the judging of each division if the judge indicates he/she would like a preview.

B. PRINT ENTRY RULES

1. Each print entered must have a completed label attached to the back of the print including; name of maker, title, date entered and Division (Open or Special Subject). The writing or printing on the form must be legible. Labels must be attached on the back of the print in the upper left-hand corner for correct viewing of the print.
2. All prints must be matted or mounted with a total size (including mat board) of no larger than 18" X 24" and no smaller than 8" X 10". Exception: One side of a Panorama Print may be no larger than 36". Prints that are smaller than 5" X 7" will not be accepted. The maker's name must not appear on the viewing surface of the image. Framed prints shall not be entered.
3. Prints accompanied by entry forms should be submitted no later than 15 minutes prior to the start of the regular monthly meeting.
4. Prints receiving a score of 10 points, in each class, will be regrouped and judged for selection for the Print-of-the-Month honors. Print-of-the-Month honors will be given in Class A, AA & AAA.

C. DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRY RULES

1. Digital images must be submitted in a format and by the deadline specified by the Competition Vice-President. Digital images may be submitted by email, mailed (CD) or delivered (CD) to the Competition Vice-President. Definition of Digital Image: An image taken with a digital camera, a negative, slide or print scanned into the computer and processed digitally.
2. Images must be in a format compatible with the projector. The key thing to keep in mind when formatting photos for submission is that the projector we use in the competition has a (maximum) resolution of 1400 x 1050 pixels. This means that any photo that exceeds this size in either dimension, could end-up being cropped by the projector. In other words: the image width cannot be more than 1400 pixels and the image height cannot be more than 1050 pixels. If your image is horizontal, only change the width to 1400, if your image is vertical, only change the height to 1050. Do not change both. Down-sizing the image from the "native" resolution coming out of your camera also significantly reduces the file size. This helps when emailing the files and takes-up less space on our hard-drives.
3. The maker's name, title of image, date entered and division (Open or Special Subject) must be included as the title of the image. When you have finished re-sizing your image save your image with a new title. For example do a Save as: Smith Sunrise Splendor 05-15 O.jpeg. (O-Open or SS-Special Subject). Specify whether you're Beginner, Advanced or Very Advanced.
4. Digital Images receiving a score of 10 points, in each class, will be regrouped and judged for selection for the Digital Image-of-the-Month honors. Digital Image-of-the-Month honors will be given in Class A, AA & AAA.



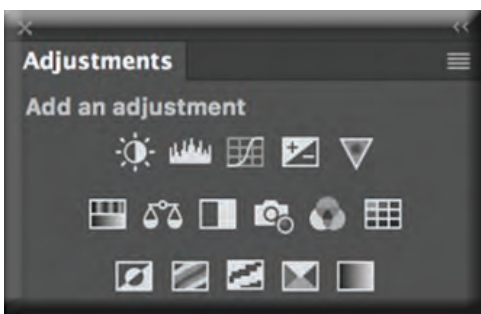
Adjustment Layers are a special kind of Photoshop layer. Rather than having content of their own, they adjust the information on the layers below them. For example, you can use an adjustment layer to increase the brightness or contrast of a photograph without altering the original photo. They're one of the most important tools to master in Photoshop.

If you aren't familiar with layers and layer masks, be sure to [check out our explainer on the subject](#)—and if you're new to Photoshop, you should also check out our [8-part beginner's guide before continuing](#).

Non-Destructive Editing: One of the Most Important Photoshop Concepts You Can Learn

When you're working in Photoshop, it's never good to manipulate the pixels in the original image. If you mess up, you might not be able to undo things. Instead, you want to use non-destructive tools and techniques. Adjustment layers are one of these tools. They alter the image below, but you can always turn them off or modify them, so your original image stays untouched. You aren't stuck with what you've done.

For example: if you destructively convert an image to black and white, you're throwing away all the color information. You aren't able to go back and change it back to color if you save the file. If you use the Black and White adjustment layer, though, you can go in at any stage and adjust how each color is converted to gray—or turn off the layer entirely to get your color image back. (This is also why [backups](#) are important for any mission-critical files.)



The Five Basic Adjustment Layers (and How to Use Them)

To use an adjustment layer, click on its icon in the Adjustment Layers panel. You can then dial in the effect you want in the Properties panel. The controls for each adjustment layer are different and specific to its purpose.

Each adjustment layer automatically comes with a [layer mask](#). That way, you can have it affect certain areas of your image instead of the entire thing.

Photoshop has 16 different adjustment layers. However, if you're just staring out, there are only five you need to be familiar with. As you get into more advanced Photoshop work, you'll learn to use the other ten.



Brightness/Contrast

The Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer is the simplest way to adjust the exposure or contrast of an image. Drag the Brightness slider to the right to brighten things, drag it to the left to darken things. It's the same for the Contrast slider: drag it to the right to add contrast, drag it to the left to take it away.

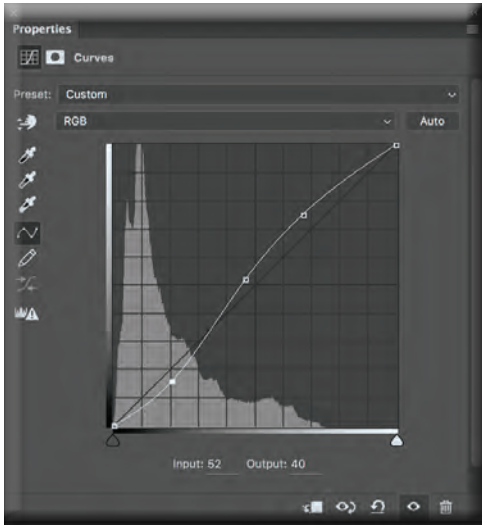


Levels

The Levels adjustment layer is another way to adjust exposure and contrast. The histogram represents all the tones in the image.

RELATED: [How To Make Your Family Look Like They're In A Michael Bay Movie](#)

Drag the black handle under the histogram to the right to darken your image. Drag the white handle to the left to brighten it. The gray handle controls the midtones: drag it to the left to brighten the midtones, and drag it to the right to darken them. There are a few more advanced options with Levels but, when you're starting out, you don't need to worry about them. Just play around with the sliders to achieve [the effect you want](#).



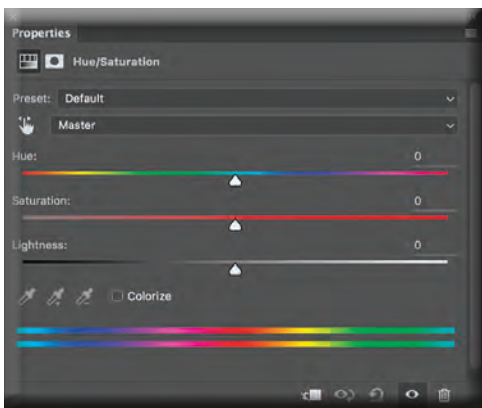
Curves

The Curves adjustment layer is the most powerful (and advanced) way to modify exposure and contrast. It's a bit beyond most beginners, however it'll frequently pop up in Photoshop tutorials, so it's worth knowing.

The sloped line over the histogram represents the current tones in the image. Changing the slope of the line determines how each group of tones is affected.

Click anywhere on the slope to add a point. Drag the point up to brighten the corresponding tones; down to darken them. You can add as many points as you need. By manipulating which points you drag up, and which you drag down, you can add contrast to the image.

Again, [this tool is very advanced, but there's a lot you can do with it](#)—you'll see it in a lot of Photoshop tutorials around the web. [Check out our explainer on histograms](#) for a more in-depth look on how it all works.



Hue/Saturation

The Hue/Saturation adjustment layer is a simple way to adjust the colors in your image. Every color has a hue, saturation, and lightness value. The Hue/Saturation adjustment layer's sliders correspond to them. Drag the relevant slider around to manipulate that aspect of the colors.

RELATED: [Quick and Dirty Vintage Photo Effect in Photoshop](#)

By default, you're editing all the colors as a whole. From the dropdown where it says Master, you can select any of Photoshop's six primary colors—the Reds, Yellows, Greens, Cyans, Blues, and Magentas—to modify on their own. With this, you can achieve [all sorts of different effects](#).



Black & White

RELATED: [How to Convert Your Color Photos to Stunning Black and White Prints](#)

The Black & White adjustment layer is the best way to convert an image to black and white. It has six sliders: one for each of Photoshop's primary colors. Each slider controls how that color is converted into grayscale. Drag the relevant slider to the right to darken those colors; drag it to the left to brighten them.

Adjustment layers are the best way to modify the tones and colors in your images. But most importantly: they don't change the original pixels so you can always go back in and tweak things. Some adjustment layers, like Curves, can be a bit tricky to get to grips with but it's worth the effort. They're a huge part of most Photoshop work.



One of my favorite tools for ensuring proper exposure and light in my photography is the use of the camera's histogram. A tool that is often misunderstood and pegged as overly complex or confusing is really just a simple way for your camera to tell you if it got everything in the shot. So, what is the histogram? And how can you use it to maximize your efficiency and enjoyment of photography? Let's take a look.



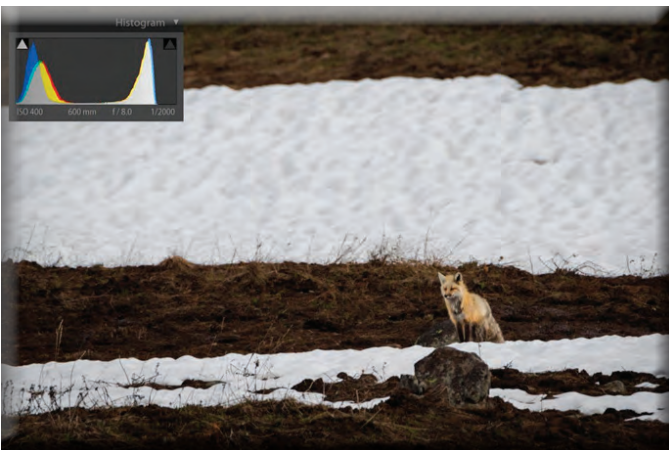
This is a scene from Glacier National Park shown with the corresponding histogram which indicates it is a dark scene with a good variety of green and blue colors and minimal reds and whites. How do I know that? Keep reading to find out. Photo Credit: Chris Gheen

What is a histogram?

The histogram in your camera or displayed in your photo editing software is really just a graph displaying the amount of varying types of light within your photo. The graph is indicative of a gradient of dark and light tones. Dark tones are displayed on the left, with light tones to the right. The more data points you have on one side or another will tell you if you have a generally bright or dark scene. It is then up to you to interpret this information in conjunction with the scene you are viewing in real life to determine if your shot is properly exposed. By understanding how to read your histogram, you'll find yourself with better exposures and less work to do in post processing. I also like to use my histogram to help me manually bracket an image, so knowing the intricacies of the histogram can be especially helpful there as well.

How do I read a histogram?

A common misconception is that the histogram will tell you if your image is properly exposed. While that may be true to some extent, the histogram is really only telling you the balance of light within the image. See my last post on metering to gain a better understanding of a tool to help with proper exposure. To have a well-balanced histogram (displayed as an even bell curve in the middle of the graph) means that all of the data points in the image are centered on the middle of the light spectrum and should be indicative of a variety of colors within the scene. An all-white image will typically be shifted towards the right, while a darker scene will have the majority of the data points centered on the left portion of the histogram. If your data points go off the top of the graph, this just means there is a disproportionate amount of that one type of light. If this is true in your scene, there is no need to make adjustments. However, if you feel that your scene is actually balanced with a wide variety of light and colors, it may be a good idea to revisit your white balance and make sure that your camera is capturing the varying types of light in accordance with your scene.



This scene from Yellowstone has only bright and dark tones, and relatively little color. As a result, you can see the histogram is showing peaks in both dark tones and light tones with little data in between. Photo Credit: Chris Gheen

Some histograms also display colored light points from left to right getting colder to warmer respectively. This means that, when observing your scene outside of the camera, if you see a more green/blue scene like the one above, you can also expect to see your data points skewed to the left. Warmer scenes with more reds and yellows will be skewed to the right. The color balance is based on the assumption that your image is properly exposed as mentioned above, and as such is generally a good guideline for white balance. If you're finding that your green/blue scene is coming out more purple or even red, you'll see this on the histogram and know to adjust your white balance to a cooler setting.

When the data points from the histogram are seen going off the sides of the graph, this is called clipping. Clipping occurs when the image is either over exposed or under exposed and will indicate a need to modify your exposure accordingly, either by use of shutter speed, ISO or aperture. The presence of clipping will tell you that your camera is not capturing all of the light points from your scene, and as a result, your image will either have "blown out" lights or darks, depending on which side is clipping. This can be detrimental to your photography because when you insert that image into your post processing program, no matter what you try, you will be unable to brighten or darken the image enough to get that data to display as anything other than black or white (or more commonly a weird pixelated grey). Your camera has captured no data for that portion of the image, and the ability to improve your image is severely limited.



By under exposing the shot, it may not be clipping on the darks, but it looks unnaturally dark and grey, so being conscious of your scene is important when monitoring your histogram.

By over exposing the image, you can see an example of clipping the whites, and as such, there is data lost in

Neutrally exposed

Is all clipping bad?

As I've mentioned many times before, a lot of things in photography are only good or bad based on your ability to display them intentionally. If your scene has a lot of white in it (like when shooting Yellowstone winter wildlife) you may find that having your histogram tracking to the far right is good, so long as you're not clipping and losing some of the highlight data. On the flip side, if you're shooting the Northern Lights with us in Alaska, you'll almost certainly find that your histogram will consistently be to the far-left side of the graph, and you may even be clipping a bit. Depending on your personal artistic style, you may be totally fine with this, as shooting a night sky comes with the understanding that there are simply dark portions of the sky that would appear unnatural otherwise.



Another time that you may find yourself intentionally clipping is when shooting silhouettes or sunbursts. It's unnatural to be able to look at the sun and make out all of the colors of light coming from it, and as such, your image will likely be blown out in the area right around the sun, especially if other portions of your image are properly exposed. When shooting a silhouetted subject against a brightly light background, again, it is the photographer's artistic license to expose the image in a way that the silhouetted subject is completely devoid of color, and will thus appear black, both in the image, and on the histogram.

This scene has an intentional silhouette, and as such, it makes sense to intentionally cause the clipping seen on the left side of the histogram. Photo Credit: Chris Gheen

How do I make the most of my histogram?

When using the histogram, the first thing I look for is clipping. This will let me know roughly if my exposure is adequate and (if shooting in RAW) if I'll be able to make the most of my image by brightening dark areas or darkening the brighter areas. By ensuring I'm not clipping any of my brights or darks, I know that my camera has captured all of the possible data within the frame and, regardless of how the image looks on my camera's display, I know I'll be able to manipulate it in post processing to give it the look I want.

The next thing I'll look for is to see where my light concentration is within the histogram. If I'm shooting a generally bright or warm scene, I'll want my data points to be more concentrated on the right side of the graph. Darker or cooler scenes, I'll want to make sure I haven't over exposed. When shooting landscapes, I often prefer to slightly underexpose, as they create a moodier aesthetic, so I'll look to the histogram and see if I've got some space to play with on either side of my data points, and if so, will typically try to darken my image a bit. When shooting wildlife, I prefer a more documentary feel, so will want to make sure I'm well exposed and my data points are more evenly distributed. This will help to ensure I can provide a clean look that is indicative of the scene as it truly was, rather than being over or under exposed for an artistic quality.

I also like to utilize my histogram to manually bracket my images. By using an automated in camera bracketing, I'll often find that some of my images are unusable because I've clipped too much of my darks or lights, resulting in more work for me when it comes time to blend the bracketed images. By carefully watching my histogram, I can manually bracket my image to ensure I haven't lost any data, while still preserving the extreme ends of the light spectrum in subsequent frames. I may end up intentionally clipping on one or two frames, but will know that as long as I've not caused any clipping on at least one frame, the data is there and I can then be confident that I'll be able to bring it back in post processing no matter how dark or light the image looks on the viewfinder.



Another great benefit of utilizing the histogram is that when shooting in really dark or really bright conditions (like night photography or under bright sunny skies), I can ensure my exposure is correct without my eyes playing tricks on me. Often times when shooting night scenes, your eyes have adjusted to the darkness, so every shot will appear brighter on the camera's screen than when you get home and see it on your computer. The opposite happens when you've been outside in midafternoon shooting under sunny skies, and you may think each shot is darker than it actually is. By using your histogram, you have an objective method for ensuring proper exposure that will not be altered by your eyes' natural adjustments.

By carefully monitoring my histogram, I was able to capture this image at a time that presented itself with little opportunity for fiddling with settings or redoing the shot. Photo Credit: Chris Gheen

Overall, the histogram can be an incredible tool that will help any photographer ensure they got the shot they want. The more you use it, the more you'll begin to understand the nuances of the light data and be able to maximize you're in the field efficiency. Photographers with a good handle on their camera's histogram will find themselves taking fewer set up shots and having more time to compose compelling images while throwing out fewer images due to blown highlights or shadows. It's something that I encourage every one of my guests to try when on a trip with [Backcountry Journeys](#) and I highly encourage you to try it too. Good luck, and happy shooting!



Chris Gheen

Chris grew up exploring the mountains of North Carolina, originally with his family on weekend camping trips and later as a self-taught rock climber and backpacker, leading him ultimately to a degree in Recreation Management from Appalachian State University with a focus in Outdoor Experiential Education. Immediately after graduating, Chris drove west, knowing the mountains and opportunities for adventure were much bigger. Since then, he has worked in a variety of guiding applications, from small leadership non-profits, to adolescent wilderness therapy, to commercial hiking and tourism guiding in California, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana, always with a camera in hand. Chris loves teaching and sharing his passions and experience with others and is sure to provide careful insight and education whenever the opportunity arises. Chris currently resides in Bozeman, Montana where easy access to Yellowstone National Park allows him frequent trips into the park to photograph wildlife and the unique geologic features of the area. When not behind the lens, he spends his time backcountry skiing, ice climbing, and mountain biking, always

on the lookout for a new unique perspective to photograph. The mountains have always been a point of inspiration for Chris and he is excited to capture the beauty of the natural world in an effort to share the space he is so privileged to work in with those around him. For a look at some of Chris' work, visit his website www.chrisgheenphoto.com.