

How to edit smartphone photos to look like film

Film photography is a favorite style of photo editing for many people. While files from mirrorless cameras are more commonly used, you can also create these types of edits with photos on your smartphone.

Here's how to do it using 2 different apps.

1. Edit photos in film camera style on smartphone in VSCO

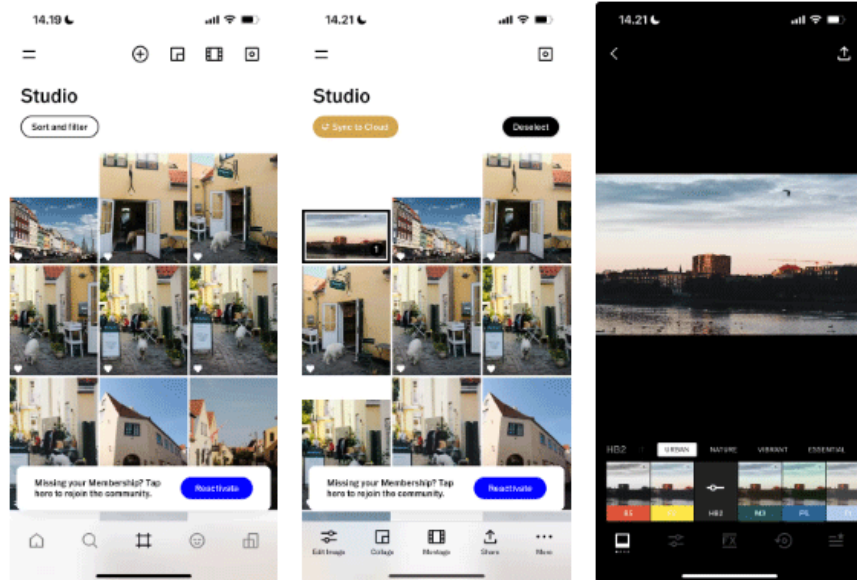
VSCO is the best free film-style smartphone photo editing app. You can do it two ways: Add presets or make manual adjustments.

If you're on the free plan, you'll want to choose the first option, as you can only add grain effects if you sign up for a paid subscription. However, this article will also show you how to create a more film-style effect even without grain.

How to Use VSCO Presets for Film-Style Editing

Let's start by looking at how to use preset settings:

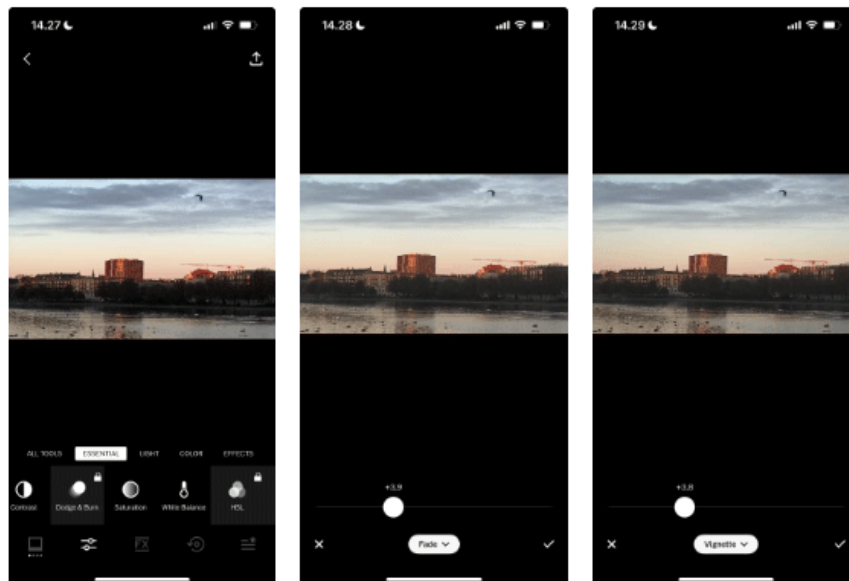
1. Import your photos into VSCO by tapping the + icon in the **Studio** tab .
2. Select the image you want to import.
3. Double-click the photo in Studio once it's added there.
4. Choose a preset that suits your needs. For a film-style look, you'll want to look for photos with warm tones and heightened shadows.



How to edit film camera style photos from scratch in VSCO

Alternatively, follow these steps to start editing from scratch.

1. Import your photos into VSCO using steps 1-2 in the previous tutorial.
2. Start by adding a little warmth and making the tones more green in **White Balance**.
3. Select **Fade** and move the slider much to the right.
4. Adjust the saturation and exposure to your liking and add a little sharpening.
5. Add some texture to your photo to finish things off. You should also consider changing the contrast, depending on what's already in the photo.



In addition to VSCO, you might also want to check out these ways to get Polaroid style photos.

1. Get VSCO for | (Free, in-app purchases available)

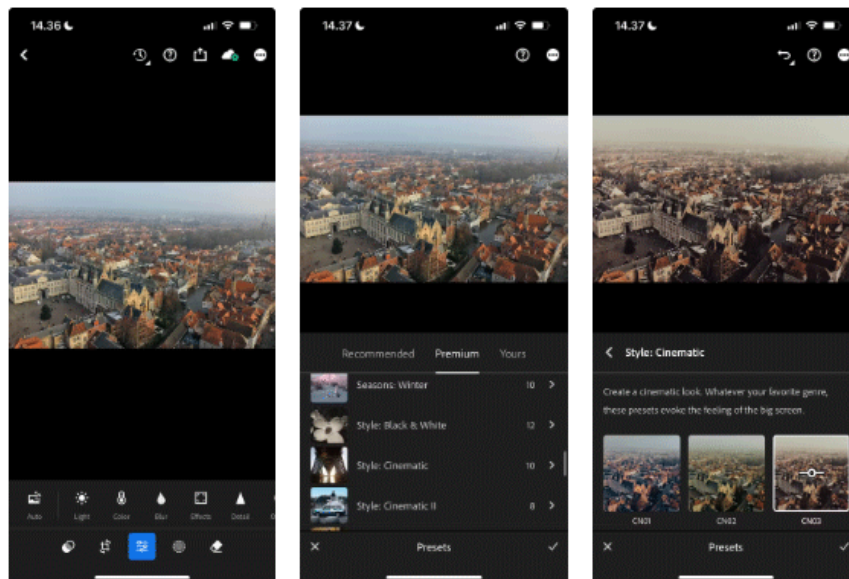
2. Edit smartphone photos in film camera style in Lightroom

Lightroom gives you more options for film-style smartphone editing, and while it costs money, you get grain effects and other features. Like VSCO, you can add presets or start from scratch.

How to Add Film Style Presets in Lightroom

First, here's how to add film-style presets in Lightroom:

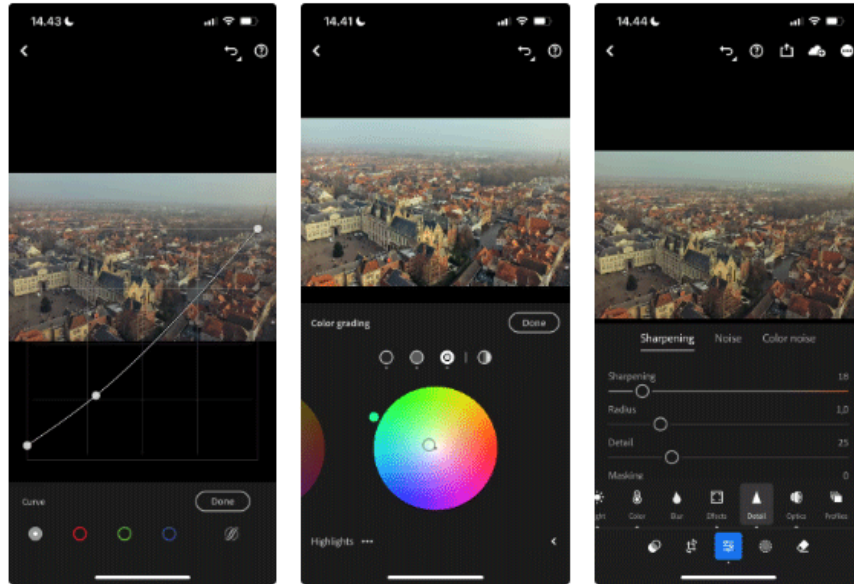
1. Open the Lightroom app and select the photos you want to import.
2. Select the **Presets** tab (the icon with overlapping circles on the left side).
3. Browse through the available presets. You can use your own presets, but you'll also find some presets in the **Cinematic** section .
4. Choose a film-style preset that best suits how you want your image to look.



How to edit smartphone photos in film camera style in Lightroom from scratch

If you want to create film style photos from scratch, here's what you should do:

1. Add a little warmth and green tones by tapping the slider icon.
2. Select **Grading** and adjust the warmth in the shadows, midtones, and highlights.
3. Go to **Effects > Grain** and move the sliders until you're happy with what you see. Then change the **Size** and **Roughness** sliders .
4. Change the exposure, saturation, etc. in any way you feel necessary.
5. **Go to the Curve** tool .
6. Add some fades to your photo and adjust the lighting in other parts of the photo to your liking. If you're particularly skilled, you can also tweak the RGB curves.
7. Add some sharpness to the image. You should also remove some clarity and add some texture/dehaze.



Whether you choose Lightroom or VSCO, you have plenty of options for film-style editing. We recommend Lightroom for its wider feature set, including grain effects, but the free version of VSCO is also a good option.

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