

How to use the Color Grading feature in Adobe Lightroom

As you can guess from the name of this tool, Color Grading allows you to adjust the colors in certain parts of the image.

Before October 2020, Split Toning was one of the most popular tools for editing colors in photos using Adobe Lightroom. But as any photographer who has used it before will tell you, this feature - while useful - has its limitations.

Since then, however, Adobe has replaced Split Toning with a color wheel. These existed in Adobe Premiere Pro long before it came to Lightroom, and they work similarly.

This article will show you how to get started with color correction for photos in Lightroom, and you'll also learn what this feature does.

What does Color Grading do in Adobe Lightroom?

As you can guess from the name of this tool, Color Grading allows you to adjust the colors in certain parts of the image. You can use these color wheels to adjust hue and saturation; for each of these elements, you'll also find a brightness slider at the bottom.

The Color Grading feature will add as many colors as you want to your photo. It differs from the individual color sliders, which focus mainly on increasing those specific colors in the image.

Color Grading is useful in many situations. For example, you can make your photos look more orange, yellow, or red than they really are.

Should the color be edited before making other edits?

While you can use Color Grading whenever you want, it's a good idea to make basic edits before this process. Why? Because if you don't, your edits will often look untidy and it will take you longer to fix these errors.

In particular, using the HSL sliders for each color is a good idea before editing. Similarly, you should determine if you want to adjust other basic settings -such as exposure, texture, and contrast.

Besides using the sliders, you should also make other edits before color correcting your photos in Lightroom. For example, you should make sure that you choose the correct camera profile. Likewise, the early stages are a good time to do lens corrections and crop your photos.

If you want to do more advanced color corrections after using Color Grading, you can always use Photoshop alongside Lightroom.

What color wheels are available in Lightroom?

In Adobe Lightroom, you'll see three primary color wheels: **Midtones**, **Shadows**, and **Highlights**. Each of these color wheels affects colors in that particular area of the image without affecting other parts.

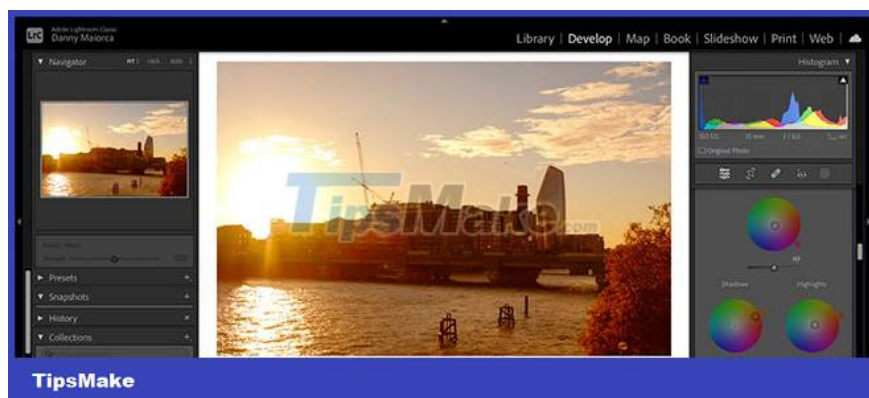
You'll also see a color wheel that changes colors for the entire image. It's called **Global** and you'll find it in the last circle in the Color Grading section of the Lightroom app.

Regardless of whether you use **Lightroom Classic** or **Creative Cloud**, you will have access to the color correction wheel. And if you use Adobe Lightroom on your smartphone or tablet, you'll see them too. This is different from Photoshop Express for mobile which still uses Split Toning.

How to color correct photos in Lightroom

Now, let's see how you can color correct your photos in Lightroom. First you need to go to the **Color Grading** tab.

To increase the saturation in the image, move the circle in the center of each wheel to the edge. You'll need to be careful, though, as moving the circle too much can lead to an oversaturated image - as you can see below.



If you want to change the hue, you can move the circle around the different colors on the wheel. And to change the brightness, all you need to do is move the slider left or right for each section.

When editing photos in Lightroom, you may also want to change the view. While many editors like to see the three main wheels together, you can click the individual circles at the top of this section to focus on each wheel one by one.



Once you've finished coloring your photos in Lightroom, you can save and export them. In addition, you can make more advanced adjustments in another application.

Get started with color correction in Lightroom

Editing the brush color is such a daunting task, but it's actually quite simple. And with a good understanding of how it works, you can dramatically improve the results of your photo editing - and find a style that suits your personality.

If you're new to color correction, take a moment to experiment with the color wheel one by one. To improve your workflow in the future, you can save your favorite edits as preset values.

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